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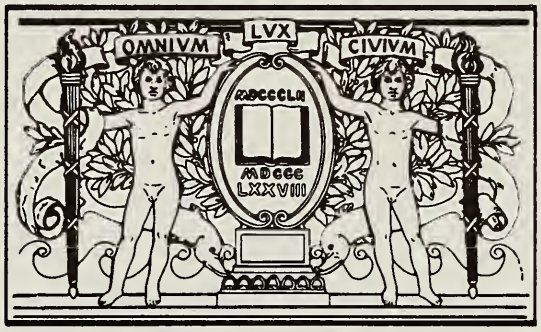
Through a Dutch Door

17th Century Origins of The Van Voorhees Family

Published by The Van Voorhees Association



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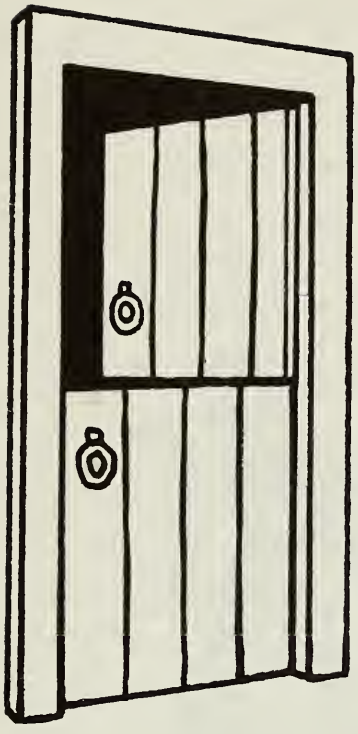

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FOREWORD

The Van Voorhees Association is very pleased to make public the information contained in this book. The Association has long engaged in research on the descendants of Steven Coerte Van Voorhees here in America and will be publishing successor books to The Van Voorhees Family, Volume I, The First Four Generations, which came out in 1984. At the same time, there have been lingering questions as to who Steven Coerte's own forebears were in the Netherlands, what prompted him to emigrate in 1660, and what became of those family members who remained behind. Answers to these questions, if indeed they were available at all, would presumably depend upon research possible only in the Netherlands.

Quite fortuitously, the Association became aware of the research capabilities and interests of Dr. Jan Folkers in the Netherlands. The Association's Historical Committee under the able leadership of Manning W. Voorhees pursued this possibility and solicited a research proposal from Dr. Folkerts. The Executive Committee approved the research plan as negotiated by the Historical Committee and authorized funding at the proposed level. When the results of this research were seen to exceed even our most optimistic expectations, and when it was learned that Dr. Folkerts felt there was still a bit more that might be obtainable through limited further research, an extension of the project with additional funding was authorized by the Executive Committee. It is the view of the Committee that this overall expenditure constitutes one of the best investments made by the Association throughout its history.

The Van Voorhees Association was founded in 1932 by Dr. Oscar M. Voorhees and others of the extended Van Voorhees family. While the immediate impetus for this was the desire to commemorate in some appropriate manner the 275th anniversary of the arrival of Steven Coerte Van Voorhees in America, the desire for a more permanent type of organization was felt by all. To that end, it was agreed that membership would be open to all who bear the Voorhees name in any of its spellings and also to collateral relatives whose lineage could be traced back to Steven Coerte. A

program of research would be developed to correct and bring up to date the seminal work of the family published by Elias W. Van Voorhis, Jr. in 1888, and plans would be made to hold an annual meeting of the members. The officers of the Association would be assisted in these regards by an Executive Committee.

The Fiftieth Anniversary meeting of the Association in 1982 was planned as a commemorative occasion but also helped launch the Association into what is probably its most active period to date. This volume of historical research is just the latest example of this activity. It includes the report of the project by D. J. Wijmer, the principal investigator, and related reports by Dr. Folkerts and by Peter J. Christoph of the New Netherland Project. Because of the key role of the "Voorhees Letters" to our understanding of the Van Voorhees Genealogy in both the old and new countries, we have reproduced the four letters previously published and also seven more "new" letters recently discovered by Rev. William J. F. Lydecker as translated by Dr. Charles T. Gehring of the New Netherland Project.

The Executive Committee takes pride and pleasure in making this contribution available not only to those of the extended Van Voorhees family but also to any and all having interest in the 17th century emigration from the Netherlands.

Donald G. Vorhis
President
Van Voorhees Association

INTRODUCTION

This volume is one in a continuing series by The Van Voorhees Association to record for posterity our family history and our Dutch heritage.

Since 1932 the Association has pursued the genealogy of Stephen Coerte's descendants, who traced a lineage to this patriarch from the village Voor Hees near Ruinen in the province of Drenthe, the Netherlands. Arriving in Nieuw Amsterdam in the little ship "De Bonte Koe" on April 15, 1660 with his wife, eight children and a son-in-law, Stephen Coerte is the ancestor of fourteen generations bearing many variations of the Van Voorhees name.

This volume is the outgrowth of research sponsored in Holland by the Van Voorhees Association in the period 1987 to 1989. Largely through the efforts of Manning W. Voorhees of Fair Haven, New Jersey, Chairman of the Historical Committee, a research project was conceived and defined with Drs. Jan Folkerts and his associate D. J. Wijmer of the Netherlands.

This project was completed in 1989 and constitutes the first and major section of this volume. The report, Section I, "Steven Coerts - His Family and His Dutch Background" proved to be of historical and scholarly significance as well as genealogical significance to the Van Voorhees family. Hence, this volume was conceived as an opportunity to include a collection of pertinent publications and background materials concerning the emigration from Holland in the seventeenth century.

Two other research papers by Drs. Jan Folkerts discuss the emigration from Drenthe — the who, where, when and especially the why.

Two papers by Peter R. Christoph of the New Netherland Project in Albany, New York give background on Dutch-American history, and an interesting episode in the affairs of a Drenthe emigrant.

Finally, translations of eleven "Van Voorhees Letters" are included because of their importance to our knowledge of the Van Voorhees family members, their lives in Holland, and the circumstances surrounding the emigration from Drenthe.

Four of these letters were published by the Association in 1962 and have been included in *The Van Voorhees Family, Volume I, The First Four Generations (1984).*

Seven additional letter translations are included, as a result of an exciting discovery in 1989 at the New York State Library in Albany, New York by Rev. William J. F. Lydecker, Chairman of the Genealogical Committee of the Association. We were fortunate to have these previously unavailable letters translated by Dr. Charles T. Gehring of the New Netherland Project at the New York State Library.

These eleven "Van Voorhees Letters" span a period of 1684 to 1729.

Special thanks are due to Stephen LeC. Shyers of Newark, Delaware for his patient typing efforts in drafting this manuscript, and to Hazel Dulin Voris of Springfield, Missouri for her careful indexing of this volume.

So, this volume reflects its title — "Through A Dutch Door". In this context a Dutch Door is closed on the bottom half, restraining us from stepping out of the present, but open on the top half, permitting us to look into the past. We hope this look into the past — the 17th Century Origins of the Van Voorhees Family" — will bring some measure of insight and appreciation of our Dutch heritage to you, our reader.

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HOW IT BEGAN

It all started in April of 1984.

I was exploring the Netherlands and Hees with the Van Voorhees Tour to Holland that was well run by Mildred V. Kerr. We stopped in Assen for a visit with the Archivist of Drenthe, Paul Brood. After an excellent talk about Steven Coerts and his era, Mr. Brood gave us a guided tour of his library stacks where a great many original documents and books from the 16th, 17th and 18th Centuries are carefully preserved. I stood there wondering, "what is in these old books that we don't know—what can they tell us about Steven Coerts?"

Time passed. At a meeting of the Executive Committee the following Spring, I suggested that the Association engage a qualified researcher to find out for us what is in the ancient tomes at Assen about our common ancestor. The Committee eagerly adopted the idea and, with the assistance of Mr. Brood, the Association engaged Jan Folkerts to delve into the old records. Dr. Folkerts and his associate, Dr. D. J. Wijmer, were successful beyond anything that I dreamed could be possible while standing in the library stacks. The research went beyond Assen, of course, and the result is the feature article in this book that is the definitive work on Steven Coerts and the Van Voorhees Family in The Netherlands.

Incidentally, I found the name Coerts on an employee time card at the Archivist's library in Assen. The name lives on! Dr. Folkerts advised me that our ancestral name is "quite common in Holland".

Later during the Van Voorhees Tour we stopped at the open air museum at Arnhem (Het Nederlands Openlucht-museum). The museum has a 17th Century Drenthe farmhouse and workers' quarters that my wife and I found to be very interesting. The workers' facility is a low building covered with sod and a small bush called Hes. A gardener working around the area told us, in answer to our question, that the name Hees originally came from the indigenous bush Hes. Wow! We carefully clipped a specimen and I showed it at a subsequent Annual Meeting of the Associa-

tion. Father Bill Lydecker was so impressed with my stated origin of the name Hees that he sought a live Hes bush at several garden centers in Northern New Jersey. What could be better for the front garden? Unfortunately, none could be found, alive or in reference books. Dr. Folkerts' work clearly defuses that idea.

Manning W. Voorhees

Notes for the Reader

To help the reader navigate the maze of places and names, the following comments are offered:

1. There were three farms near Hees in the northeastern province of Drenthe that were the homesteads of the Coerts family. These were:

Voorhees	before Hees,
Middlehees	in the middle from Hees, and
Achterhees	behind Hees.

2. The Dutch system of naming children in the late 16th and 17th centuries can be confusing, particularly since the same relatively narrow number of names seem to recur. Generally, a son's last name was his father's first name to which was added "—sen". Thus, Steven Coerts' son was Coert Stevensen. This name reversal would be continued in many instances through successive generations. It will be noted that some female names end in "je" or "tje". This diminutive is added to a basic women's name — e.g., Antje (Ann + tje).

Although there were apparently differences in the Netherlands, the Dutch in America typically—and without many variations—followed a definite pattern in the naming of their children: first son for the paternal grandfather, second son for the maternal grandfather, first daughter for the paternal grandmother, second daughter for the maternal grandmother; etc. Accommodations were made in special situations, such as children by a second spouse. When a wife had died, not uncommonly her successor's next female child was named after the preceding wife.

3. The typical 17th Century Dutchman was an inexact speller, to say the least. Personal names often were spelled phonetically, especially by unrelated persons such as church clerks, scriveners, and the like. The spelling used by a person for himself, however unlettered, should be considered in each case to be the correct spelling.

The reader will encounter Steven Coerts' name spelled variously as Coert, Cort, Coers, Cuers, Cours, Koerte, Koers, Kort, Kuers, Coerte, etc. By tradition, the Van Voorhees Association has preferred Coerte.

4. The genealogical charts appended to Dr. Wijmer's article will help in following our family through the generations identified in Holland.

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Section I

STEVEN COERTS
His Family and His Dutch Background

BY D. J. WIJMER

This section records the research carried out for the Van Voorhees Association by D. J. Wijmer in collaboration with Jan Folkerts. The objectives were to research the 17th Century Drenthe in general, the Van Voorhees family and their emigration, the lands occupied by the Van Voorhees family, and to extend the family genealogy both before and after Steven Coerts came to America.

Research sources included rent-master accounts, resolutions of provincial bodies, 16th century archives of Dikninge Abbey and other late-medieval sources, and town archives, such as Steenwick and Overijssel.

The Association is grateful that two talented researchers were available with the experience and dual language skills to ferret out and integrate the pertinent information in a systematic way.

Drs. D. J. Wijmer was born in 1957 in the city of Zutphen, Guelderland. He studied history at the University of Groningen and since 1984 he was associated with the Rijksarchief of Groninegen and the Dutch Reform Church.

Drs. J. Folkerts was born in 1953 in the town of Zalthommel, Guelderland. He studied journalism in Utrecht and history at the University of Groningen, and was a freelance journalist in Amsterdam. With publications on New Netherlands and Dutch New York, his main subject has been agriculture in 17th century Dutch New York. He was associated with the State Archives in Drenthe and Groningen, and presently is an archivist in Overijssel at Zwolle.

Several photographs taken in 1984 of modern Hees and of 17th Century farm houses preserved at the Netherlands Open-Air Museum, Arnhem give us a feeling for the farms and structures described in this section.

Introduction

In 1660, Steven Coerts and his family, including his son-in-law Jan Kiers, emigrated to the then Dutch colony of New Netherland. They formed part of a much larger group of farmers that left the Dutch province of Drenthe in the mid-seventeenth century to start a new life in America.[1]

Very probably, Steven Coerts was born in 1600 at a farm called Voorhees, in the little hamlet of Hees near the village of Ruinen. Anyway, his son Coert Stevens called himself 'Van Voorhees'. Thus, Steven Coerts can be considered the founder of the American branch of the older Dutch "Van Voorhees" family.

Many researches have been made into the history of this family in America, that is after 1660. But until now no systematic researches have been carried out into the oldest family history, i.e. before the emigration. This article is an attempt to fill this gap. It includes four main parts. The first contains a short description of the situation in Drenthe between 1580 and 1660. This is necessary for a good understanding of the main part of the article, for in this period a destructive war was going on, which deeply affected the lives of the inhabitants of the province. The second part describes the farms at Hees until 1660: their history, their size, their relationship to the convent of Dikninge, etc. The third part deals with the inhabitants of these farms and their next of kin, i.e. with Steven Coerts, his ancestors, his family living at the time that he left behind and their descendants. This part of the article continues until the nineteenth century.

The last part embraces a number of factors that may have contributed to Steven's decision to leave the Netherlands.

Finally, I have taken the line that the contents of the sources that have been published so far, particularly the four letters, are known to the reader. These "Van Voorhees Letters" have been published by the Van Voorhees Association and are included in this research volume.

Drenthe in Time of War, 1580–1660

For most of the period between 1580 and 1660 the political and economic history of Drenthe was heavily influenced by acts of war, originating from the revolt of the Dutch provinces against the Spanish Habsburg monarchy. Although the revolt actually started in 1568, Drenthe was hardly involved until 1580. The only contacts were the passing by in 1568 of the army of the Duke of Alva on its way to the battlefield of Heiligerlee, and the wandering about of groups of soldiers from 1572 onwards. This situation

radically changed in 1580. On April 11 of that year Drenthe joined the 'Unie van Utrecht', the union of the revolting provinces; and after Rennenberg, the 'stadhouder' of the northern provinces, had gone over to the Spanish side in the same year, Drenthe became a theatre of war. At the outset, the southwestern part of Drenthe was generally controlled by the revolting or 'Staatse' troops, and the rest of the province by the Spaniards. From 1592 onwards the 'Staatse' army got the upper hand; in 1594 it conquered the important northern city of Groningen, and in 1597 a series of cities in the province of Overijssel. This made orderly warfare in Drenthe impossible for the Spanish army, but by way of plundering and levies it kept causing great damage. Only from 1627 onwards the situation improved little by little, and after 1630 Drenthe was completely safe again.

The war had drastic effects on the economy of Drenthe, and thus on its inhabitants too. Firstly, there were the direct consequences: devastation of the crops (after 1584 worsened by the introduction of the scorched earth policy), plundering and the redemption of it, the nuisance of quartering and of drunken soldiers, the disturbance of trade and the normal administration of justice, etc.

Secondly, the inhabitants groaned under heavy financial burdens. For some years Drenthe even paid taxes to both warring parties: the regular taxes to the Union, and redemption money to the Spaniards. After 1600 the system of farming out the different taxes was introduced in Drenthe; indirect taxes on consumer goods and agricultural means of production were farmed out to private persons, who after paying the rent could collect a tax in a certain area on their own account. They, in their turn, often hired collectors to do the actual work in a certain town or village.

The situation described above caused an extensive emigration to neighbouring provinces, especially Friesland and Overijssel. Many farms laid waste for years (in 1600 about 33%!). Only about 1630 the situation had become fairly normal again. Generally, the period from 1625 to 1650 can be regarded as one of recovery and comparative prosperity. The years around 1650, however, mark the break-point for a long period of conjunctural decline, worsened by a growing burden of taxation. But, however cynical this may seem, we are lucky that this was the case; for thanks to this taxation we have the rich information from the tax-registers at our disposal, which has been used extensively in this article.[2]

The Farms

The farms at Hees are mentioned in the sources for the first time in the year 1180 (1181), in a document in which Henricus, abbot of the convent at

Ruinen,[3] enumerates the possessions of the monastery. The text (written in Latin) runs as follows: '. . . in Hes duas domos, quarum una LXII mercis argenti, altera LX libris Grunensium nummorum con- quisita est. . . ',[4] translated: '. . . at Hees two houses, of which one was obtained for sixty-two silver marks and the other for sixty pounds of Groningen value. . . '. This sentence indicates that two of the farms at Hees belonged to the oldest possessions of the monastery of Ruinen, and were bought probably shortly before the year mentioned above.[5] It seems most likely that these two farms were the two later called Voorhees and Middelhees. Achterhees seems to be of a more recent date; not only was it smaller, but maybe more significantly, it was not until 1632 that this farm was recognized as a 'full farm'[6] by the crofters and commoners of Ruinen.[7]

After this early mention the farms at Hees disappear out of sight until 1568. But, although there is no evidence for it, there is a fairly good chance that they suffered from the war between the bishop of Utrecht and the people.[8] of Drenthe in 1227/1228. For in 1228 the army of the bishop invaded the 'Landschap' and burned down the area between the Reest (a little river forming the border between Drenthe and Overijssel) and Ruinen, which area included Hees: 'Quinto eciam loco apud Umme milites de Daventria et de Sallandia et de Vechta per paludum prope Restam intrantes, quandam partem terre contra Runen incendere ceperunt' (translation='At a fifth place too, near Ommen, knights from Deventer, Salland, and the area of the Vecht have invaded the region through the marsh and have begun to burn down part of the area near Ruinen).[9]

From 1568 onwards the farms at Hees appear regularly in the financial registers of the convent as Voorhees, Middelhees and Achterhees.[10]

Although the data revealed by these registers are almost without exception of a pure financial nature (payment of rent), they give some indications that the farms at Hees got their share in the war damage after 1580. The register of 1594 reads, for instance: 'Also (from) Voorhees there has not been received (the rent) of 1593 and 1594 because of the fire. . . '[11] There is also the remarkable fact that in all late sixteenth century registers the name of the tenant is mentioned only at Voorhees. Does this mean that Middelhees and Achterhees were destroyed and/or deserted, and that only their lands were tilled? In any case, about 1600 all three were inhabited again. During the first half of the seventeenth century there are no indications anymore of direct war damage.

A clear insight into the measures of the farmhouses and the landed property that belonged to them can only be obtained from the tax registers of the mid-seventeenth century. Middelhees turns out to be the biggest,

Achterhees by far the smallest of the three farms. Below I will give a reconstruction of these farms, put together out of data from several registers dating from 1645–1660.[12] It must be noted, however, that this reconstruction is a random indication. The area of arable land stayed fairly stable through the years, even until the beginning of the nineteenth century; the area of meadowland on the other hand changed rapidly because of the distribution in private property of the until-then common lands from the first decades of the seventeenth century onwards.

Voorhees:

- house, 8 cross-beams, 27 feet wide
- barn, 4 cross-beams, 18 feet wide
- sheep-fold, 4 cross-beams, 25 feet wide
- vegetable garden, 1/2- 'mud'[13]
- yard with trees, holly-bushes and a little field, 1-1/2 'mud'
- meadow, 1-1/2 'mud'
- 18 'mud' of arable land rented from the convent
- 3 'mud' of arable land in private ownership
- 7 'deimt' of meadowland rented from the convent[14]
- 3 'deimt' in the 'Langemaat' at Hees and 4 'deimt' in the 'Spyck' at Hees)
- 3- 'deimt' of meadowland in private ownership, 2 'deimt' in the 'Manningemaat' and 1- 'deimt' in the 'Heekersmaat')
- a part of the 'Drenthland' near Kraloo, in private ownership (after 1626).
- 3 'deimt' of meadowland in the 'Boltenhorne', possessed in private ownership by Albert Coerts and some associates in 1642".[15]

Middelhees

- house, 9 cross-beams, 24 feet wide
- barn, 5 cross-beams, 23 feet wide
- sheep-fold, 4 cross-beams, 18 feet wide
- vegetable garden, 1/2 'mud'
- yard with brushwood, hollybushes and oakwood, 1 'mud'
- meadow, 2-1/2 'mud'
- 23 'mud' of arable land rented from the convent (including two fields on the 'Zuid-es' near Ruinen)

- 13 'deimt' of meadowland rented from the convent (6 'deimt' in the 'Langemaat' at Hees and 7 'deimt' in the 'Grotemaat' at Hees)
- 1-1/2 'deimt' of meadowland in the 'Heekersmaat' in private ownership.

Achterhees

- house, 7 cross-beams, 28 feet wide
- barn, 5 cross-beams, 19 feet wide
- sheep-fold, 4 cross-beams, 19 wide
- vegetable garden, 1 'schepel [16]
- yards with brushwood, 1- 'schepel'
- meadow,
- 18 'mud' of arable land rented from the convent
- 1 'mud' of arable land in private ownership
- 11 'deimt' of meadowland rented from the convent (7 'deimt' in the 'Grotemaat' at Hees and 4 'deimt' in the 'Kleinemaat' at Hees)
- 1 'deimt' of meadowland in the Heekersmaat in private ownership.[17]

The three farms described above, especially Voorhees and Middelhees, were among the bigger farms in the parish of Ruinen at the time.

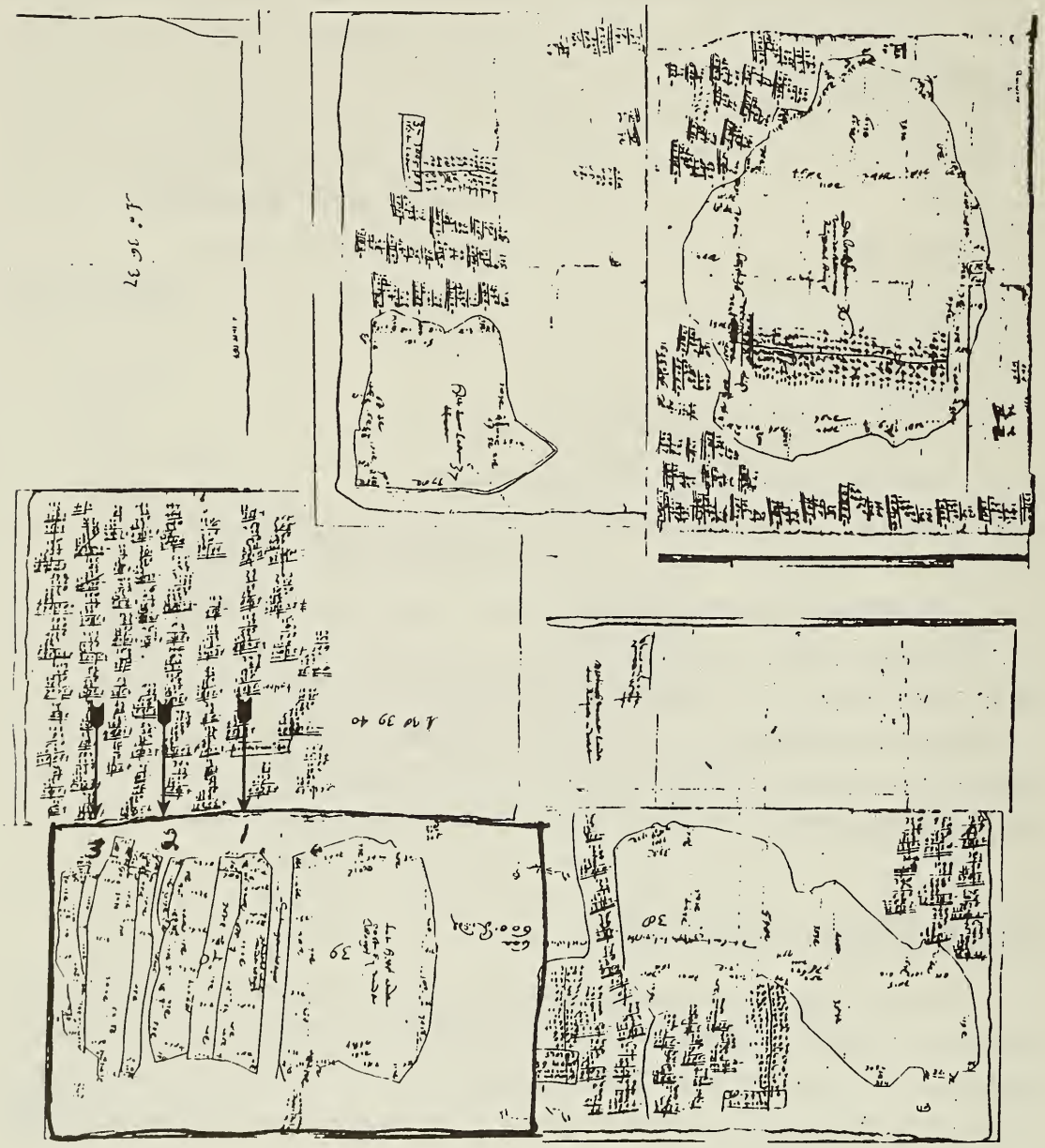
Several maps are reproduced from archives and land registry records showing the situation in 1642 and 1832 and superimposed on a modern map. A map of the Hees-Ruinen area shows a general orientation.

Explanation to the maps:

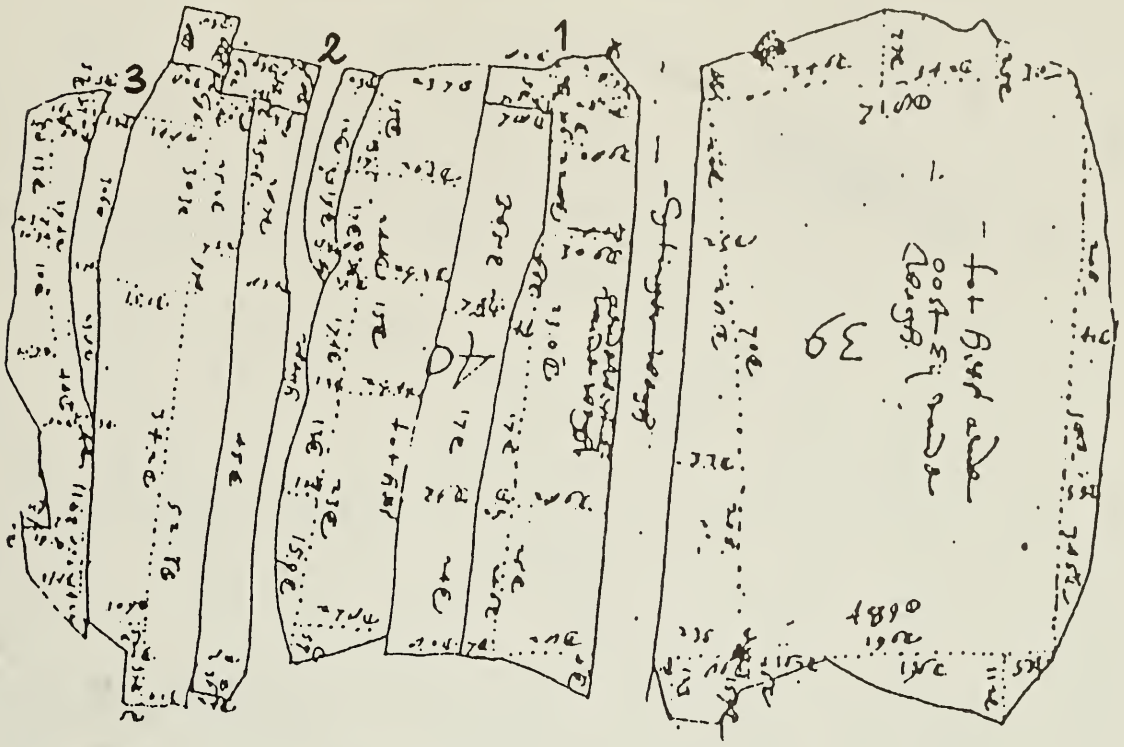
1) and 2) The farms at Hees and their arable lands on the 'Heester es' on a map made up for the land tax (1642 ?); 1 = Achterhees, 2 = Middelhees, 3 = Voorhees. (Oude Staten Archieven, 845). The numbers inside the drawings indicate the size of the parcels. The numbers next to the drawings are calculations for the land tax.

3) The farms at Hees, their arable lands and some of their meadows on a map made up for the land registry,1832, Ruinen, section G, folio 3. It thus reflects the situation of that year. As for the arable lands, i.e. the lands on the 'Heester es', practically nothing had changed since the mid-seventeenth century. For the meadows on the 'Heester weide' the situation is more complex; at least part of them was probably acquired after about 1660.

4) The arable lands and meadows, according to the situation of 1832, drawn on a modern map of Ruinen and the surrounding region. (Grote



Map 1. Farms at Hees (from Land Tax Map 1642?)



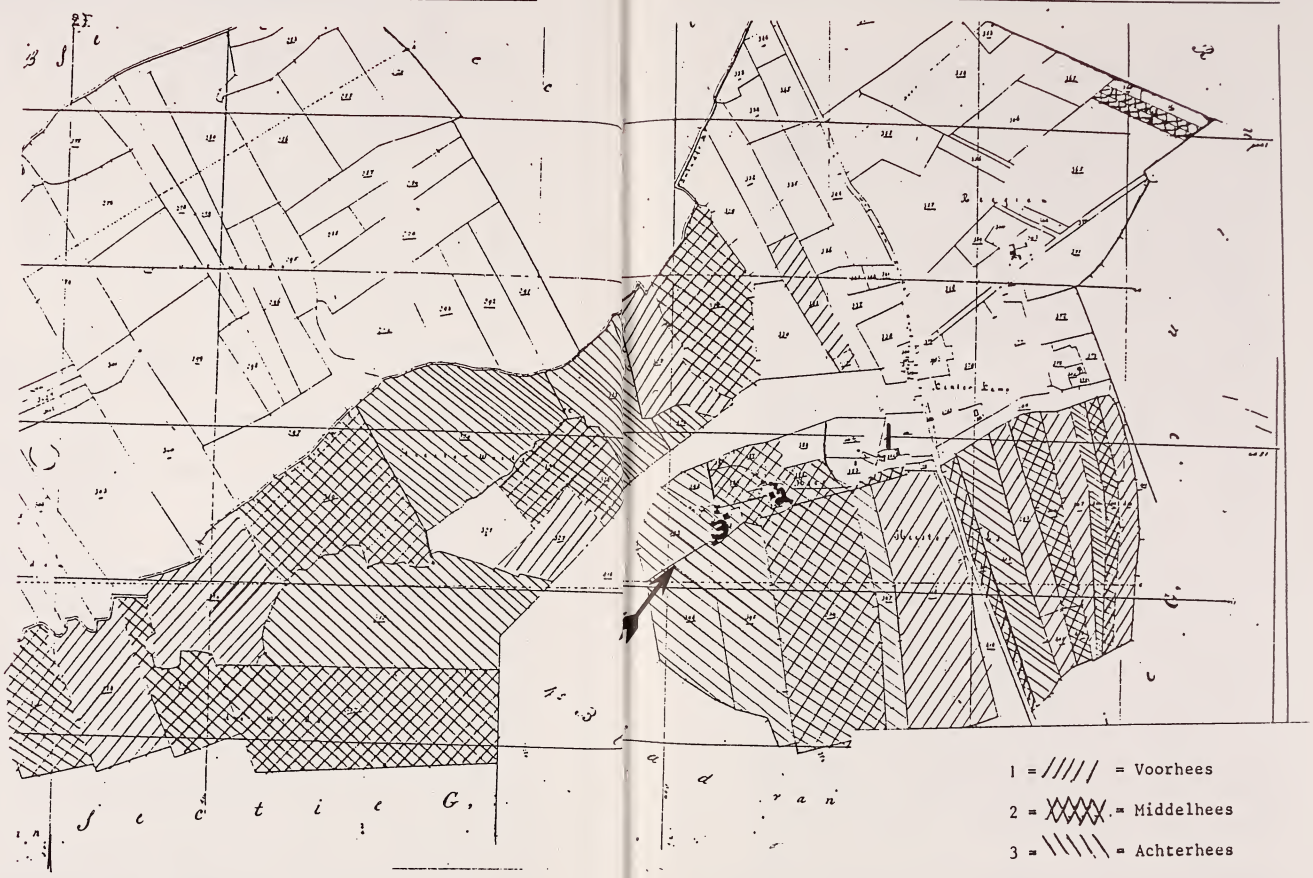
Map 2. Farms at Hees (from Land Tax Map 1642?)

topografische atlas van Nederland, 1:50.000, vol.2: Noord-Nederland, Groningen, 1987).

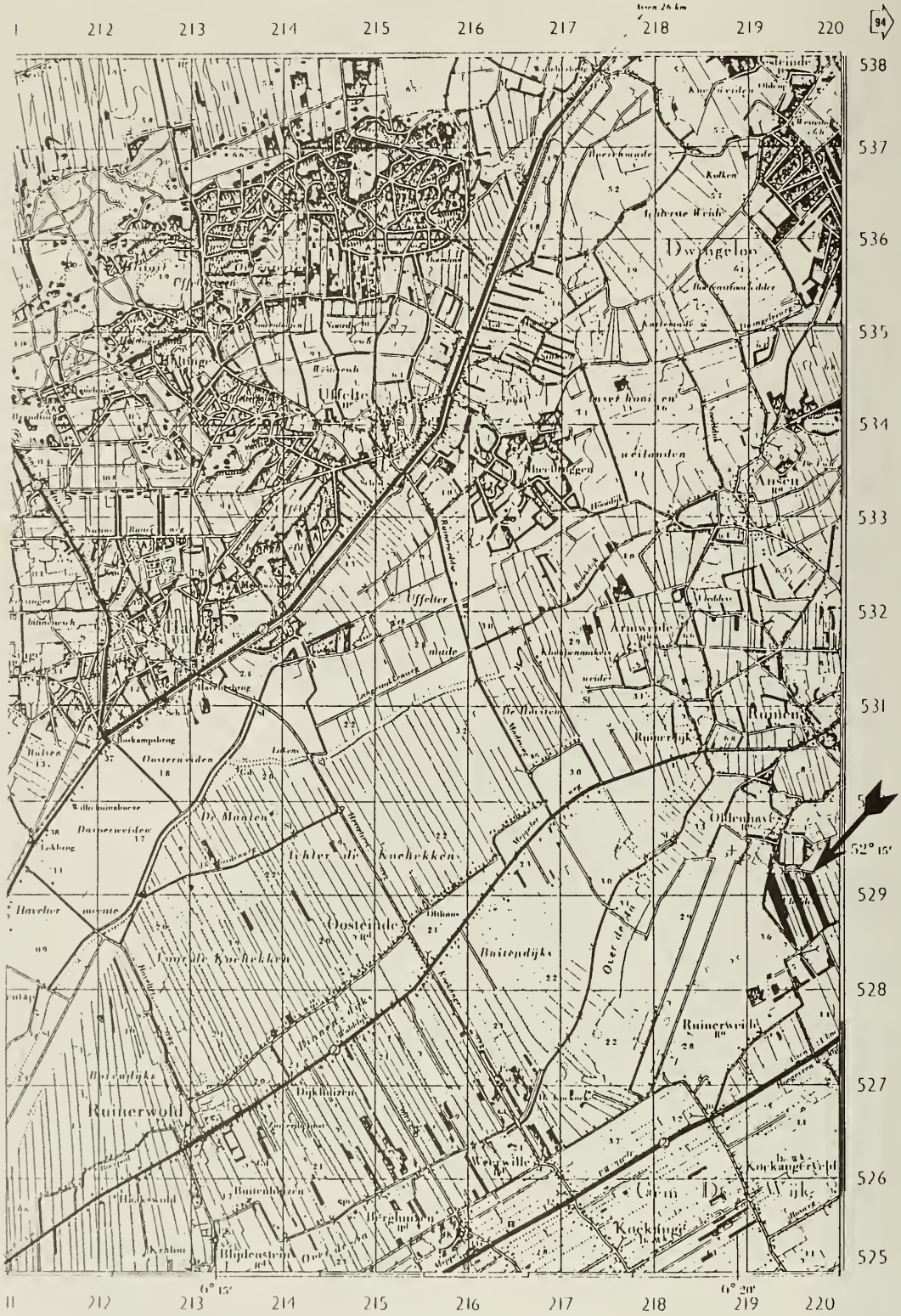
5) The Hees and Ruinen area

6) A part of the province of Drenthe, 1638

All three of them were so-called 'full farms' or 'full ploughs' (Achterhees only after 1632!), and in the registers of the 'haardstedengeld' (fireside money) of 1672 and later years they are stated as farms with "four horses"[18] Their form of husbandry, and that of 'Pol's erve' too, [19] may not have differed much from other farms on the sandy soil of Drenthe. Mixed husbandry was common, in which arable farming and cattle breeding were equally important, though arable farming formed the heart of the husbandry. On the arable lands mainly rye was produced, and in addition some oats and buckwheat. A substantial part of the harvest had to be set aside for paying the rent. Until about 1630 tenants paid the so-called 'third sheave', which meant that one third of the harvest had to be handed over to the convent. After 1614 they paid an amount of rent fixed anew each year (though in bad times the third sheave was sometimes reverted, for this system spread the risks of a bad yield between owner and tenant). By way of example I will transcribe two entries, the one dating from 1602 and representative of the 'third sheave system', the other from 1619 and representative of the 'fixed rent system':

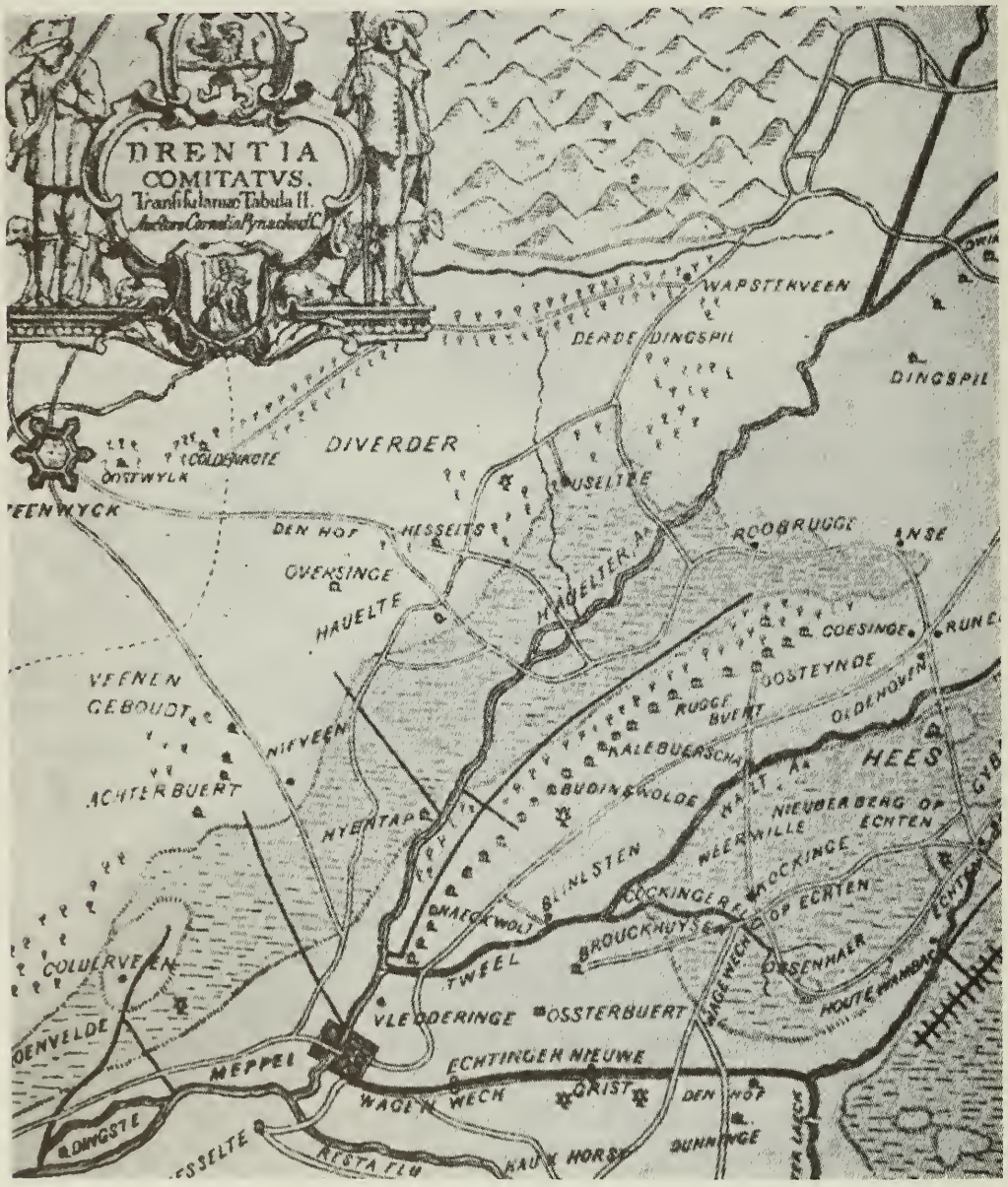


Map 3. Farms at Hees 1832 (from Land Registry)



Map 4. Farms at Hees (1832). Superimposed on Modern Map. (Grote topagrafische atlas van Nederland, Vol. 2, Nord Nederland, Groningen, 1987)

Map 5. Hees and Ruinen Area



Map 6. The Hees-Ruinen Area (From the Atlas Le Theatre du Monde, by Guillaume and Jean Blaek, Amsterdam, 1638.)

1602: 'Also the rent-sheaves to Hees.
Firstly there are to be threshed at Voerheess

taken from (our) own farm	99 sheaves of winter rye
	and 28 sheaves of summer rye
Taken from Middelhees	154 sheaves of winter rye
	and 14 sheaves of summer rye
	as well as 15 sheaves of oats
Taken from Achterhees	100 sheaves of winter rye
	and 28 sheaves of summer rye' [20]

1619: Voerheess great -21-'mudden' of arable land and 7- 'dachmaet' of meadowland has been as before for the time of six years running from May 1614 rented out to Albert te Voerheess for 24 'mudden' of rye yearly, which have been received by the 'rentmeester' for the sixth year of the rent so here—24 'mudden'

Middelheess great -18-'mudden' of arable land (and) 11 'dachwerk' of meadowland has been for the same six years, running as mentioned above, rented out to Jan and Willem te Middelheess for 30 'mudden' of rye yearly which have been received here by the 'rentmeester' at the time of appearance of this account so here—30 'mudden'

'Achterheess great -18-'mudden' of arable land (and) 10 'dachwerk' of meadowland has been also for the time of six years running from May 1614 rented out by the lords 'Drost and Deputies' to Coert te Achterheess for 20 'mudden' of rye yearly, which here have been received by the 'rentmeester' also for the sixth year of the rent at the time of this account comes here—20 'mudden' [21]

In the same year (1619) 'Pol's erve' consisted of 17-1/2 'mud'of arable land and 6- 'deimt' of meadowland. It had to pay 21 'mud' of rye yearly.[22]

A vigorous increase of the rent took place in 1626, caused by a resolution of 'Drost and Deputies' who decided that the farms owned by the 'Landschap' of Drenthe [23] should be rented out to the highest bidder.[24] That is the reason why we come across members of the 'nobility' of Drenthe as renters of the farms at Hees between 1626 and 1633: 'Jonker' van den Boetzelaer at Voorhees and Middelhees, and Jacob Oosting tot Spyr at Achterhees. However, during these years the 'old' tenants kept using the farms, be it as subtenants. In these years the rents had increased to 38 mud for Voorhees, 50 mud for Middelhees, 35 mud for Achterhees and 31 mud for Pol's erve.[25] After 1633 the rent stayed at the same level for a number of years, but then fell to respectively, 32, 43, 32 and 28 'mud'.[26]

Apart from paying the rent, part of the produce had to be reserved as seed for sowing and for consumption, which meant that little was left to sell at the market (whatever was left was usually sold at the markets of Hasselt, Steenwijk and Groningen). Moreover, the farms were extremely vulnerable to bad weather, disease and the plague; in 1635, for instance, the tenants were granted extension of payment by 'Ridderschap en Eigenerfden' of Drenthe because of bad earnings and death among cattle.[27]

Cattle breeding, therefore, formed a necessary supplementary source of income. Thanks to lists concerning the taxes on 'horned animals', we know the size of the stocks of horned cattle in 1641. In that year Voorhees possessed 20 head, Middelhees 21, Achterhees 22 and Pol's erve 16.[28] The greater part of the stocks probably consisted of young lean oxen, intended for export as cattle for slaughter to the urbanized areas in Holland and Flanders.[29] For the most part they probably grazed on the common fields (as the farms had practically no 'own' meadows).

Apart from the horned cattle, each farm possessed a flock of sheep. The size of these flocks is unknown, but the number of sheep may have been substantial: firstly, because of the size of the sheepfolds, and secondly, because a tax list from 1630 mentions a 'common shepherd' living at Voorhees.[30] The word 'common' probably means here that he had to take care of the flocks of Middelhees and Achterhees as well. Furthermore, the four farms, being 'full farms' or 'full ploughs' (Achterhees only after 1632) each held four horses.

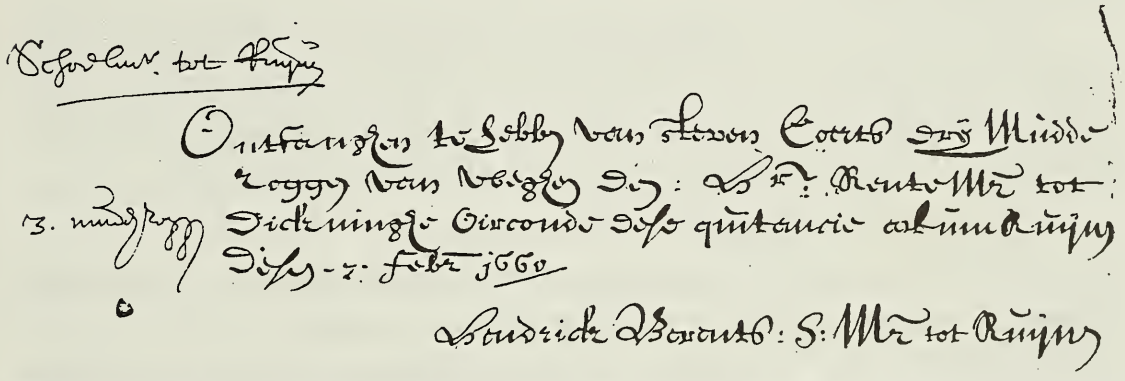
Thanks to the above-mentioned tax lists of 1630 and 1641 we also know how many people lived at the respective farms in those years. In 1630 ten persons lived at Voorhees, thirteen at Middelhees, nine at Achterhees and eight at 'Pol's erve'. In 1641 the numbers were respectively eleven, fourteen, nine and five.[31] Unfortunately the lists do not give further specifications as to the composition of the inhabitant-groups. As has already been mentioned above, the farms we are dealing with formed part of the property of the convent of Ruinen, later of Dikninge. This meant that there were closer ties than just the paying of the yearly rent alone. The data concerning the years before 1614 are scarce, but the financial registers of the convent make mention of special financial contributions.

Firstly, the farms had to pay the so-called 'small tithes', to the amount of one guilder each year.[32] Secondly, there is a note dating from 1606 concerning the payment of 'sheeptithe': in that year Voorhees, Middelhees and Achterhees each paid two sheep, and 'Pol's erve' one sheep.[33] Besides this, 'Pol's erve' had to pay a yearly amount of 'buttertithes'.[34] Thirdly, there were some contributions to the church of Ruinen.[35] These, however, con-

cerned all inhabitants of the parish; the registers mention the 'klokrogge' and rye for the so-called 'getijdenbrood'.[36]

We get a better insight into the relationship between the convent and its tenants after the secularization of the institution in the beginning of the seventeenth century. This secularization did not mean that the convent property fell apart. As a financial complex the abbey remained intact and became as such a domain of the 'Landschap', administrated by an official called 'rentmeester' [37] in service of 'Drost and Deputies' (or 'Staten') of Drenthe. This led to an extensive financial administration from 1619 onwards, not only concerning the yearly rents the farmers were due to pay, but also concerning charges, mortgage debts, judicial help for the tenants, requests for help because of poverty, alimonies paid from the convent revenues, etc.[38] Below I will give some examples; because of the great quantity of data it is impossible to do this at full length.

The accounts show that the tenants could submit all costs of repair to the 'rentmeester'. Most of the time these charges concerned small amounts, like small expenses of nails, boards, paying the carpenter and so on. In 1633, for instance, Steven Coerts charged two guilders and eleven pennies for new windows, and once again in 1660 eleven guilders and eight pennies to pay the smith.[39] When major repairs were necessary, a special request had to be made to the 'Drost and Deputies', as was done by Albert Coerts van Voorhees in April 1653 and March 1654.[40] Part of the revenues of the convent was used to pay out various alimonies; firstly, to the 'rentmeester' and some of her officials of the 'Landschap', and secondly to the ladies who inhabited the convent, and thirdly to a (growing) number of schoolmasters and preachers all over the province. By way of example, a receipt from 1660:



English Translation: 'Schoolmaster at Ruynen. To have received from Steven Coerts three 'mudde' of rye on behalf of the 'hr. rentemeester' of Dickninghe. I confirm this receipt. Actum Ruynen this February 7 1660'. in margine: '3 mudden of rye'. —'Hendrick Berents, schoolmaster at Ruynen'.[41]

This situation led to a serious conflict between a would-be preacher of Ruinen, Gerhardus ab Essen, and the tenants of Dikninge, which ultimately resulted in the arrest of Johan Coerts van Middelhees in Steenwijk in 1624 (this story is described in full length later on in this article).

Finally, the tenants of Dikninge probably had to conduct some statute labour for the lords of Ruinen, though it is possible that they sometimes were (illegally) forced to do so. At any rate, in 1615 they complained about this to the 'Drost and Deputies'.[42] The nature of these services is unknown.

The Inhabitants

A: Background

As for the inhabitants of the farms at Hees and their mutual family-ties, there are positive and continuous data only for the first decades of the seventeenth century onwards. There are two important reasons for this. On the one hand, the accounts of the 'rentmeester' of Dikninge begin in this period. On the other hand, maybe more important, from this time on a patronymicum is consistently used, usually followed by a dwelling place, such as for instance Albert *Coerts* van *Voorhees*. Fifteenth and sixteenth century data mostly lack these additions; consequently, we have to do with a first name and only the addition 'to Hees'. That is why the making-up of a genealogy of the family before 1600 is a difficult and dangerous operation. Besides, the addition 'to Hees' did not necessarily mean that a person actually lived there; it could also denote the fact that a person was born at Hees. Let us take for instance Jan *to Hees* in de *Weyde*, appearing as a tenant of Dikninge between 1568 and about 1590. He was born at Hees (probably Voorhees), but lived at a farm in the parish of Ruinerwold (then called Blydenstede).

As a consequence, I will describe the members of the family until about 1620 in chronological order (as much as possible). After this year I will divide the description into three parts, describing the family-branches descending from Voorhees, Middelhees and Achterhees separately.

B: The period until about 1620

The first person appearing in the sources who can be connected with one of the farms at Hees is Jan thoe Hees, appearing in a verdict of the 'Etstoel' of Drenthe [43] in 1445 in a case against a certain Jan de Vrische. The latter claimed that Jan thoe Hees had promised to help him (the verdict does not mention the kind of help). Apparently Jan thoe Hees denied having made such a promise. The verdict stipulated that Jan de Vrische had to

bring three witnesses to support his claim; if he did not succeed in this, Jan thoe Hees could consider himself innocent.[44]

In a verdict of the 'Etstoel' in 1540 a certain Mense ter Heest is mentioned. He surely did not live at one of the farms at Hees, because in the verdict he was proved to be a tenant of Otto Wolderen and Jacob Nesynghe. Mense had been summoned to court by Otto thoe Hanzouwe, who requested of Mense to pay him a certain amount of rye. The verdict stipulated that Mense had to pay the rye, but that he should be indemnified by his lessors.[45]

Next, a series of names is obtained from a sixteenth century register containing annotations made by a number of preachers of Ruinen between 1509 and 1579, including two lists of deceased persons. Most data in this register are written in Latin.[46] Moreover, there is a short list of deceased persons between 1580 and 1582.[47] In Appendix A the reader will find a transcription and translation of the relevant parts of these registers.

The first person on the list who is important to us is Rolof Gherts in Hees, who died in 1515. He was married to Lamme Roesynck to Hees.[48] Next on the list is Jacob toe Hees, who died in 1518. He was married to Hille toe Hees, who died in 1520. To these two names was added, in the margin and in a different handwriting, the name of Johan Jacobs or Johan ten Torne (Toerne), probably a son of Jacob and Hille.[49] Then in 1522, Aleyt van Hees died.[50] In 1523 firstly Esse? uyt Hees died, and secondly Ghese toe Hees; to the name of Ghese was added in the margin: 'Johan Wylls to Hees mytten kynders' (= Johan Wylls to Hees with his children).[51] Ghese was married to Willem (Wilhelmus) to Hees.

It is worthwhile to cite the statement about his death here in full length: 'Anno eodem (tricesimo octavo = 1538) obiit Willem to Hees qui erat in anno sui nativitatis centesimo sexto ipso die Mathie apostoli et vicesimo quarto die mensis februarii dedeit de primo anno 31 stuivers Brabants', or translated: 'in the same year (i.e. 1538) Willem to Hees died who was in the one hundred and sixth year from his birth on the apostle Matthias and the twenty-fourth day in the month of February; he gave 31 pennies of Brabantine value the first year'. This means that he died at the age of 106 (!), and was born in 1432.[52] Willem and his wife Ghese had a daughter, Jutta, who was a servant of Otto Volkers and died of pestilence in 1533,[53] and a son Johan Wyllemss te Hees who died in 1533.[54] In 1537 Gese and Rodolpha died, respectively wife and daughter of Coenradus (Coert) to Hees.[55]

There is something more to say about this Coenradus, for he is the one we read about in the 'Ordelen' of the 'Etstoel' in 1542, when he was involved in a property law-suit with a certain Henrick Leukensz. The court-record

reads: 'Between Coerdt to Hees on the one side and young man Henrick Leukenns on the other'.[56] And some pages further on 'That both parties for this reason shall reach an agreement on how to divide a field that was sold, and of which one part is better than the other. And of the transaction both parties, between now and the next session of court, shall agree in friendship whether there shall be a judgment thereof if it be fair at the next session of court'.[57] Coerdt died in 1544. The register adds to his name 'heredes' (= heir), which probably means that he was the 'first son', who took over the parental farm.[58] This was presumably Voorhees. In 1542 Hilla, wife of Johan (Wyllemss?) to Hees died.[59] And in 1556 the mother of a certain Johan to Hees died. She was married to a member of the Dulman family.[60] In 1557 Berber to Hees died [61] and in 1558 a certain Albert te Hees.[62] The register also contains a series of lists, probably containing the names of those who had paid the contributions due to the church. They begin as early as 1556 and continue until 1558. Under Hees we find in each case the names of Albert toe Hees, Johan toe Hees and Jan Wilms (or: Jan Middelhees).[63]

So much for the data from the death lists. There are data from several other sources. In a financial register of the convent of Dikninge (starting in 1568) we find the names of 'Albert upt arve tho Voerhees', 'Jan Wilms tho Middelhees' and 'Jann upt arve tho Achterhees'.[64] They certainly are the same persons as those mentioned above. In the same register Jan te Hees in de Weide is also mentioned.[65]

Albert was probably the oldest son of the above mentioned Coerdt to Heess and his wife Gese, and had taken over Voorhees after his father's death in 1544. He appears in two items in the register. Firstly, in 1569: 'Likewise on the day of the Holy Cross Albert tho Hees sent three golden guilders in payment of his hay to our old servant Wolter who used to be on the farm (= the farm on the convent site)'. Secondly in 1570: 'Likewise on St. Vitus's day (we) paid Albert tho Hees eight rider guilders for oxen; these will be subtracted from the oxen money'.[66] Albert died on 6 April, 1581.[67]

Jan Wilms tho Middelhees was, as appears from his name, the son of a Willem, who was in his turn very probably the son of the Jan Wilms who died in 1533. He is mentioned as tenant of Middelhees from 1557 onwards.[68] He died after 1581 and very probably before 1595, in which year a Koert is mentioned in connection with Middelhees.[69] Jan Achterhees resided in Achterhees from at least 1556 until 21 August, 1581, the day of his death.[70] Nothing can be said with any certainty about his parents or children.

Then there was Jan te Hees in de Weide,[71] whose name indicates that he was born at Hees. The fact that at Middelhees as well as at Achterhees

there lived a Jan in the same generation makes it plausible that the birthplace of Jan te Hees was Voorhees. If that was the case, he must have been the son of Coerdt tho Heess and Gese, and consequently a younger brother of Albert to Voorhees (see above). The Dikninge registers mention Jan as a tenant for the period 1568–ca. 1605. He must have died before 28 January, 1605, for on that date the convent rented out the farmhouse with arable land, meadows and appurtenances which Jan tho Hees used to rent, and that was situated at Blidenstede (= Ruinerwold) to Coort (Coert) Hendrickx in de Weide.[72]

We have now arrived at a period that, as to the history of the farms and their inhabitants, is a rather shadowy one. It spans, roughly, the years 1580–1615, the time that war asserted its influence in Drenthe. Most outstandingly present in the sources in this period is Hilbrandt (Hilbert) to Hees. He is mentioned as tenant of Voorhees from 1592 until 1602.[73] But it is a fair assumption that he lived there earlier and that he took over the farm after the death of Albert to Voorhees in 1581. The first time he is actually mentioned is in 1584, buying a house at Ruinen from the convent. The records read (a) '22 March (1584) received for the house at Ruinen, which the convent has sold for 100 golden guilders from Hilber tho Hees 65 golden guilders 'facit' 91 golden 'corten"[74] and (b) 'On 1 April also received for the mentioned sold house:

1 . . . 'dubbeloe' . . . . . 6 guilders - 5 'stuivers'
. . . . .'ducaten' . . . . . 6 guilders - 6 'stuivers'
facit . . . . . 12 guilders - 12 'stuivers'
1- 'millerese . . . . . 3 guilders - 4 'stuivers'
1 'keyserscrone' . . . . . 2 guilders - 17 'stuivers'
1 'spanse pistolet' . . . . . 2 guilders - 17 'stuivers'
1 golden 'con. daler' . . . . . 2 guilders - 8 'stuivers'
4 silver'con. daler' . . . . . 9 guilders - 12 'stuivers'
3 'lewendaler' . . . . . 5 guilders - 2 'stuivers'
- 'fransoyse daler' . . . . . 1 guilder - 3 'stuivers'
3-1/2 'stuck van golden - 'stuivers'
facit' . . . . . 1 guilder - 3 'stuivers'

With this the rest of the 100 golden guilders shall be considered paid; thus, there was a loss of 18 'stuivers' because (the coins) were clipped.[75]

On 15 August, 1600, Hilbrandt is mentioned as one of the proxies of the common heirs and residents of Ruinen in a lawsuit between the latter and the inhabitants of the adjacent village of Pesse concerning the boundaries of their marches.[76] At least from 1608 (but perhaps earlier) until 1620

Hilbert lived at Achterhees. Until 1614 he rented the farm himself. After that the farm was rented by his son Coert Hilbers, but until 1620 Hilbert is mentioned as user.[77]

Apart from Hilbrandt, several sources from this period mention a certain Coert. He is a very interesting person, for it is fairly certain that he was the father of Steven Coerts. He probably was the son of Albert van Voorhees, who died in 1581 (see above). We first come across his name in 1595, in a rentierroll in which he is called Koert tho Middelhees. This may mean that he lived at this farm then, but it cannot be said with certainty. At any rate, it is remarkable that most financial registers of Dikninge, both before and after 1595 do not mention his name. Maybe Middelhees was deserted for some years because of war damage and Coert only tilled the lands in those years. The records of 1595 read:

> 1595—Received from Koert tho Middelhees 5 golden guilders of the old debt and still owes 2 golden guilders.[78]
>
> 1595, September 20—Received from Koert tho Middelhees 4 'daler' minus 3 'stuivers' for Sluitersmat for hay rent 5 - 17 - 0 remains 3 'stuivers' from 1595.[79]

In the same year Coert lent 150 golden guilders to the convent, for which amount he received as security two arable fields situated at the 'Zuides' in Ruinen. Apparently, part of the money was not repaid for a long time. In 1625 the land was redeemed by the 'rentmeester'.[80] The lands continued to belong to the farm of Middelhees however, but now as rented land. The records of 1637 mention, under the item 'expenditures', that the rent of the fields, now reckoned as part of Middelhees, were doubly entered erroneously in the years 1632–1636.[81] Thus Jan Coerts, the son of Coert and tenant of Middelhees at the time, may have rented the fields from the time they were redeemed. On 11 March, 1595, we find Coert (Coendert) as claimant in a lawsuit against Luitgen Steenberch before a local lawcourt. This court decided that Coert had to prove his claim before the Drost and the 24 'Etten' (= the 'Etstoel'). The nature of Coert's claim remains unclear.[82]

Coert moved to Voorhees probably shortly before 1600 (when Steven was born!). In any case he moved before 1602, for in that year Middelhees was rented by Jan Coerts. Hilbrandt, until that time living at Voorhees, probably moved to Achterhees one of these years. It is possible, however, that he and Coert lived together at Voorhees for some years, for there is an entry in a Dikninge register dating from 1602 that begins as follows: 'Received from Hilbrant tho Hees and Coert the amount of 200 golden guilders. . . . Hilbrant and Coert give us rye for that yearly. . .'[83] After 1614

Voorhees was rented by Albert Coerts te Voorhees, certainly the oldest son of Coert. But until 1620 Coert, now with the addition 'to Voorhees', is mentioned as user. He probably died in or shortly before 1620. It is unknown whom he was married to. He had at least three sons, called Albert, Jan and Steven (and maybe four, if Willem was a son of him too: see below).

There is one more person in this period we have to pay attention to, and that is a certain Henrick. He is mentioned only once in the Dikninge registers, in connection with Achterhees: 'Received from Henrick on Innocences' Day LI 'mudden'.[84] His relation to the family remains completely unclear, however. It is not even impossible that he was just a servant. Or was he a brother of Jan tho Hees in de Weide and the father of Coert Henrickx, who took over the farm in Ruinerwold? In that case he could have been connected with the Voorhees branch!

C: The period 1620–1660

We now have reached the point at which the mutual family ties are somewhat clearer, which makes it possible to describe the family branches descending from Voorhees, Middelhees, and Achterhees separately. This does not only include the persons who actually lived there, but also their relatives in a wider sense: thus, Steven Coerts and his son-in-law Jan Kiers for instance will be reckoned among the Voorhees branch.

C1: The Voorhees branch

As described above, Voorhees from about 1600 until 1620 was used, and until 1614 as well was rented by Coert. His successor, as tenant of the farm, was from 1614 onwards Albert Coerts van Voorhees, most probably Coert's oldest son. Albert rented the farm until 1660, though from 1642 onwards together with his son Coert Alberts. Albert appears regularly in the records of the 'rentmeester'. Most of these data, however, are not very spectacular and deal merely with little charges, as for nails, boards, etc.[85] But there are a few that are more interesting and worth mentioning here. Firstly, there is an entry from 1628 that the 'rentmeester' of Dikninge had diminished the rent that Albert had to pay that year with 10 Carolus guilders and 10 'stuivers', because the court of Ruinen had unjustly taken in security such an amount for the benefit of Reiner tot Echten.[86] From 17 February, 1635 there is a petition made by Albert to the 'Ridderschap en Eigenerfden' of Drenthe; Albert complained that the farm (Voorhees) had been rented out to him for 22 'mud', whereas the land could produce no more than 17-1/2 'mud'. Albert did not complain in vain, because 'Ridderschap en Eigenerfden'; determined that the rent should be adjusted.[87] From the period between 1645 and 1653 there are four other petitions made by Albert, all dealing with the same case. Albert owned two 'deimten' of

meadowland called the 'Manningemaet', situated 'behind the house of captain Polman' somewhere near Ruinen. These lands in 1645, in connection with the landtax of that year, were valued at 450 guilders each, whereas the directly adjacent haylands, according to Albert not better or worse than his own lands, were valued at 250 guilders. In 1647 two complaints were lodged about this case with 'Drost and Deputies' of Drenthe on Albert's behalf, one probably by the 'rentmeester' of Dikninge, and the other by Berendt van Dulmen, 'schulte' of Ruinen. Two more petitions were put up in 1653; the first probably again by the 'rentmeester' of Dikninge, the second by Jan Albers, 'bouschulte' of Pesse, Echten and Ansen. How the case turned out is unknown.[88] In 1654 and 1659 the 'rentmeester' of Dikninge sent petitions to Drost and Deputies on Albert's behalf again, this time because Voorhees needed greater upkeep. The request of 1659 even contained the following sentence: '. . . (that) his house, barn and sheepfold need urgent repairs, before it will be totally fallen into decay. . .'! [89]

Whom Albert was married to is not known. Something more is known about his children, for they are the uncles and aunts with the patronymicum 'Alberts' who are repeatedly mentioned in the famous letters written by Hilbert Coerts and Albert Coerts. [Ed: See Section IV of this volume] The oldest son was Coert Alberts. He took over Voorhees and will be described later on in this article.

Next there was Wessel Alberts; he moved to Amsterdam and was a carpenter there. In Amsterdam he married Geesie Jans Tale from Meppel on 17 April 1664. The most important part of the notification of marriage reads as follows (in translation):

"Appeared as mentioned above Wessel Alberts from Ruynen, 30 years old, house-carpenter [living] on the Haerlemerdyck, together with his friend Willem Claessen, and Geesie Jans Tale from Meppel, 27 years old, [living] at the Oude Schants, together with Hyltie Dymans, her friend".[90]

From this notification we learn that Wessel was born in 1634, and his bride-to-be in 1637. On 25 October 1665 a daughter was born, Jannetje. [91] Wessel Alberts died on 25 May 1680; in the death registers of Amsterdam he is described then as 'Wessel Aelbertz van Hees op het Bikkerseylant. We may assume that with 'op het Bikkerseylant' is mentioned the same address as with 'on the Haerlemerdyck', and that he possessed a house there. In addition to this, he owned a house 'op den Oever' in Meppel, which was sold in 1685 by his widow and his daughter for 400 'gulden' and a'dubbele ducaat' [92] When Geesie died is not known at the moment. About the further life of Jannetie the Amsterdam parish registers do not give any information. If she did marry and had children, it also was not here. Possibly

she returned to Drenthe. Wessel's brother Hilbert Alberts van Voorhees lived in the parish of Ruinerwold, probably in the direct environment of Meppel; in any case, he twice married a wife from that city. Firstly,he was married to Janien Janss in 1649 [93]; secondly, in 1658, he married Manien Wolters, widow of Jan Wolters from Meppel.[94] In 1669 a son was born, Albert Hilberts.[95] Hilbert possessed or rented a small farm, as appears from the registers of the 'haardstedengeld' (fireside money) from 1672, in which he is mentioned as possessing only one horse.[96]

Luitjen Alberts also lived in the parish of Ruinerwold, in a hamlet called Haakswold. On 16 March 1664 he married Hillichjen Bartels from Haakswold.[97] As far as is known, they had three children: in 1665 was born a son Bartelt, in 1666 a daughter Hendrichien and in 1668 a son Jan.[98] Like his brother Hilbert, Luitjen possessed or rented a small farm. In the register of the 'haardstedengeld' of 1672 he is mentioned as possessing two horses.[99]

Marchien Alberts was married to a certain Jan Meeuwes. They too lived in the parish of Ruinerwold, in a hamlet called 'de Hught'. They had at least two children, a daughter Cunnichjen and a son Albert.[100] Cunnichjen married twice: in 1677 to Egbert Jans Wemers and in 1693 to Jan Mewes; Albert married Geertjen Hilberts in 1674.[101] Jan Meeuwes is mentioned in the sentences of 'Drost and Deputies' during the year 1621, as being a tenant of the convent of Dikninge.[102] He died before 1684. Marchien died before 1699.

Jan Alberts was living at Hesselinge. Whom he was married to is not known yet, but in any case he was married some years before 1630. For in that year he is mentioned in the tax registers as Jan Alberts Sol (= ?), living with his wife, his mother-in-law and three children.[103] Jan died before 1684; when he died only one of his children, a daughter, had survived.

Hendrik Alberts lived at Tweelo in the parish of Ruinerwold. Whom he was married to is not known until now. He left five children. Hendrik rented a farmyard from the lord of Ruinen.[104] It was a small farm, as appears from the registers of the 'haardstedengeld' from 1672, in which Hendrik is mentioned to possess two horses.[105] Hendrik died before 1699.

Geertien Alberts lived at the 'Oshaer', also in the parish of Ruinerwold. She died before 1699.

Albert Coerts had at least two brothers. One of them, Jan Coerts rented Middelhees and will be described later on.

The other one is of special interest, for he was no less a person than Steven Coerts. Steven Coerts was born in 1599 or 1600.[106] Whether he was born at Voorhees is not entirely certain, because we do not know exactly when his father moved from Middelhees to Voorhees. But the fact that

Steven's son Coert Stevens called himself 'Van Voorhees' makes it plausible that the removal took place before 1600 and that Steven was born at Voorhees indeed. It is very likely that he grew up at this farm. Until the year 1642, Steven's life is still rather unclear to us at the moment. For reasons of clarity, I will begin the story in 1642, when we come across his name in two resolutions of 'Drost and Deputies. I will give a full transcription of them first, and then make some remarks about their contents:

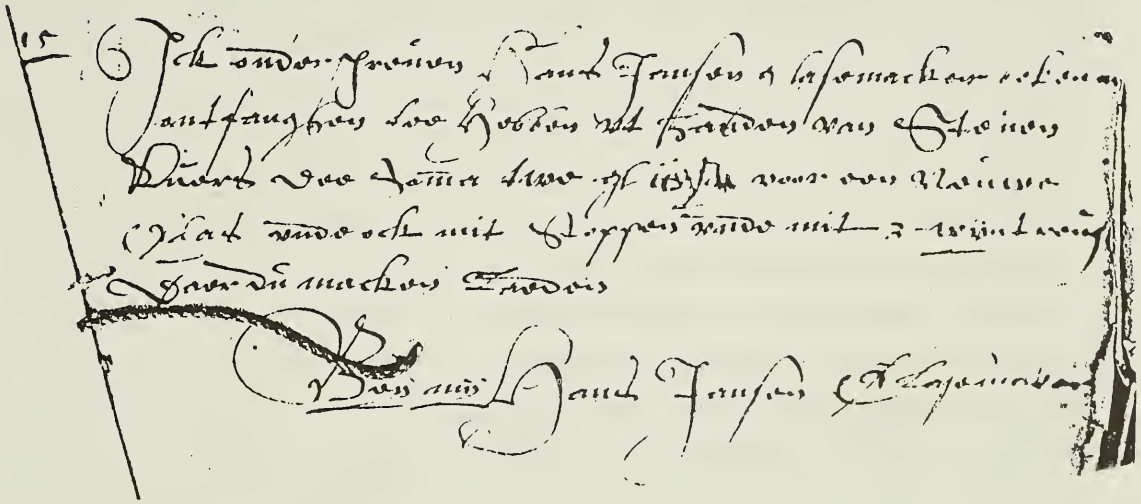
'8 July, 1642

Between Anna Laurents, farming the duty on flour[107] of Meppel during the past six summer months of 1641, having summoned Hendrick Willems in the Oosterbuir[108] as bail for Steven Coerts being absent, for that the same Steven Coerts should have concealed four persons of his family, and [Anna] therefore asking immediate [payment of] the fine and the duty on flour apart from refusal of the costs, 'Drost and Deputies' declare the defendant contumacious because of the absence [and] entitled to prove his innocence at the next session provided that this will be announced in time and the now ended one therefore again [can be] summoned'[109]

'2 December, 1642

Between Steven Coerts to Ruyne having summoned Quirijn Jans in order to make him [Quirijn] act as a guarantor for himself [Steven] as to certain action with which Anna Laurents, farming the [..?..] money during the six summer months of 1640 in the parish of Meppel threatened him because of [the fact] that he at the time should have concealed four persons [and who was now] supporting the claimant against the defendant who was his lessor, as to that he [Steven] had given the above mentioned persons and moreover had paid sixteen 'stuivers' [to Quirijn] and that he, when Anna Laurents continued her action also had agreed with the defendant as for [..?..] ducaten to pay the fine; he [Steven] therefore asked that the defendant should be forced to keep his promises in these and to guarantee him with refusal of the costs, against which was heard the justification of the defendant, who denied all this entirely and asked for [..?..] and for indemnified absolution; 'Drost and Deputies' declare that the claimant has not proved enough his claims, [..?..] again for good that [both] parties should try to unite themselves in friendship'.[110]

Briefly summarized: Steven was accused of tax dodging by Anna Laurents, farming the duty on flour in Meppel in 1641.[111] Steven in his turn defended himself by saying that: (1) he had given the number of persons of his family to his lessor (Quirijn Jans), (2) he had paid part of the amount due (half of it; the assessment was 8 'stuivers' a head) and (3) he had reached an agreement with Quirijn concerning the payment of the fine. In his defense Steven was apparently supported by Anna Laurents. Steven lost his case, because of lack of evidence. However, some very interesting data can be deduced from this lawsuit. Firstly, the number of persons that Steven should have concealed, namely four. This was probably his whole family at that time. I will go further into this matter later on. Equally important is the information about his dwelling place. On 2 December 1642 he apparently lived in Ruinen, but in the summer of the year before he lived in or around the city of Meppel. And we have evidence that he lived there for a fairly long period. Firstly, the baptismal registers of Meppel mention the birth of Wessell, son of Steven Coers from the 'Oosterbuir' on 25 September 1640.[112] Secondly we come across his name in the records of the 'rentmeester' of Dikninge in 1633, when he charged two 'guldens' and eleven 'stuivers' for new windows:



English Translation: 'I Hans Jansen, the undersigned, glazier acknowledge to have received from Steven Kuers the amount of two 'guldens', 11 'stuivers' for a new window both with puttying up and with 3 windvanes having fixed to it. I Hans Jansen glazier'. In margin: '15'.

So, in 1633 Steven was mentioned to be a tenant of Dikninge. Unfortunately, the account does not mention which property he rented. But we do have a clue. The glazier, Hans Jansen, is mentioned in several other sources as being an inhabitant of the city of Meppel.[113] Thus, we may assume that Steven, calling in the help of a glazier from Meppel, already in 1633 lived nearby that city, or, put in other words, that in year he already rented the same place as he did in 1640 and 1641. The mentioned data, namely that in 1633 he is called a tenant of Dikninge and in 1641 a tenant of Quirijn Jans, are not contradictory, but merely point to the fact that he very probably was a so-called subtenant. This means that Steven rented a property from Quirijn Jans, who in his turn rented it from the convent of Dikninge. In the tax registers of Meppel from 1642 Quirijn is mentioned to have in long lease several properties from the 'landschap'. However, it is impossible to deduce what part of it was rented by Steven. However, the above mentioned situation might explain why his name is lacking from the tax registers from 1630, which leaves the possibility that he already lived in the 'Oostbuur' some years before 1633.[114] However, his whereabouts before 1633 are still an open question. It is possible, too, that he lived at the parental farm until the early thirties, and then went to Meppel. But there is another possibility, which is that Steven lived outside Drenthe for some years. As described before in this article, in consequence of the war many inhabitants of Drenthe temporarily left their province in the first decades of the seventeenth century, and it is very possible that Steven was one of them. If so, he was back at least in 1633, then very probably lived in the 'Oostbuur' until after the summer of 1641, and then moved to Ruinen. In any case, we come across his name in the registers of the land tax of Ruinen from 1642:

'Steven Coerts 3 'mudden' land	
and 2 'schepel'	539 - 0 - 0
house and vegetable garden	300 - 0 - 0
Both above mentioned (houses, the	
other was the house of a certain Roleff,	
yet uninhabited) support the justice of a	
crofter's rise, or which reason they litigated	
(about the question) whom it belonged to	800 - 0 - 0
	1639 - 0 - 0'[115]

Steven rented a very small place indeed in these years, which becomes clear if we compare the amount of tax he had to pay with the amount paid by his family at Hees. Albert Coerts te Voorhees paid 10.372 plus

1.262 for his own lands, Geert Janss te Middelhees paid 12.342 plus 450 and Hilbert Coerts te Achterhees paid 11.072 plus 454.[116]

We meet Steven again in the 'Stating of houses and farms' of 1646, and from this we learn something more about the house in which he lived. He is mentioned among the crofters of Ruinen:

'Steffen Koers

house, 5 across-beams, feet wide between posts comes to	105 - 0 - 0
the vegetable garden with the apple garden about 1-1/2 'schepel' comes to	50 - 0 - 0
	155 - 0 - 0'[117]

The register of the land tax of Ruinen dating from the same year mentions him as follows:

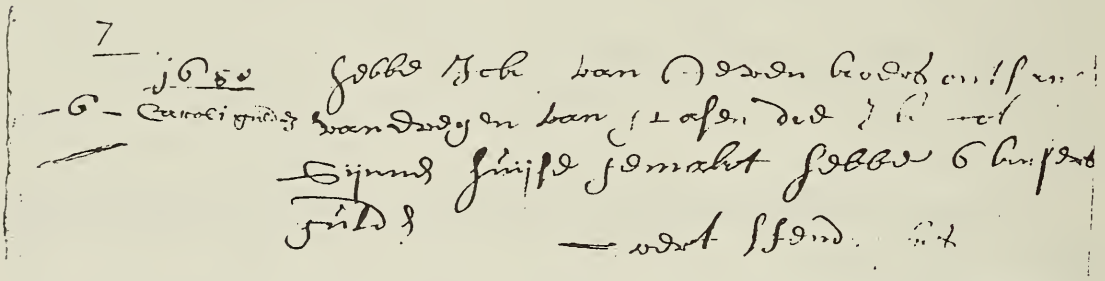
'Steven Coerts

3 'mud' - 2 'schepel'	280 - 0 - 0
the housing	105 - 0 - 0
the gardens	50 - 0 - 0
one crofter's rise	600 - 0 - 0
1 'dagmaat' (of meadowland)near the Tilmae	250 - 0 - 0
	1285 - 0 - 0'[118]

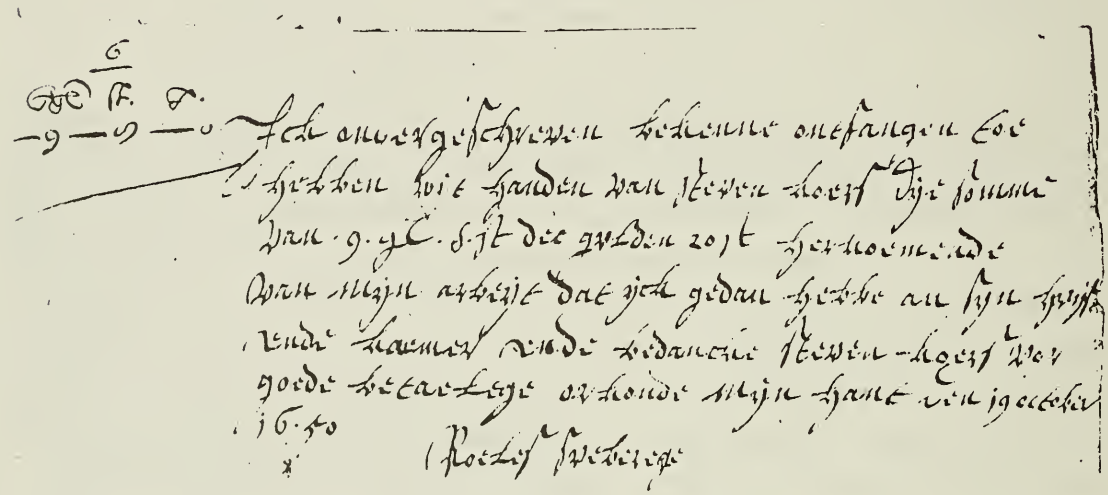
Among the petitions belonging to the 1646 land tax we find an account of the one 'dagmaat' ('deimt') of meadowland near the Tilmae: 'Steven Coerts (in margine)—firstly page 2a - 1 "dachmaet' near the Tilmae (. . .) is also mentioned at page 28 under Jan Martens at present his (?) tenant, who has left it, and it is now used by Steven Coerts'.[119] From this we may conclude that Steven rented this parcel only for a short time in 1646, moreover because he did not yet use it in 1642, according to the registers of the land tax of that year. Concerning the house Steven lived in I point to the possibility that this was the same house that Hilbrandt had bought in 1584!

Steven did not live in this house at Ruinen for a very long time, for in a register of newly built housings, dating from the mid-eighteenth century, we find some accounts which are based on a register from 1648. One of these reads as follows: 'Steven Cours housing, standing in the register with Lat.2. on 105 guilders, has been broken down and removed to the 'Regien' and has been used there according to the tidings to make the barn, and is rented out (now = ca. 1750) to the heirs of Wessel Alberts'.[120] Thus, Steven's house at Ruinen was razed in or shortly before 1648. It is possible that

Steven had moved to the 'Regien' for some years, but this is not very likely. For his house at Ruinen, now moved to the 'Regien', did not belong to the Dikninge properties. And already in 1650 Steven was the tenant of Dikninge again. Which property he rented in those years is unknown. There are left some charges from these years, two from 1650 and one from 1651 (see below):

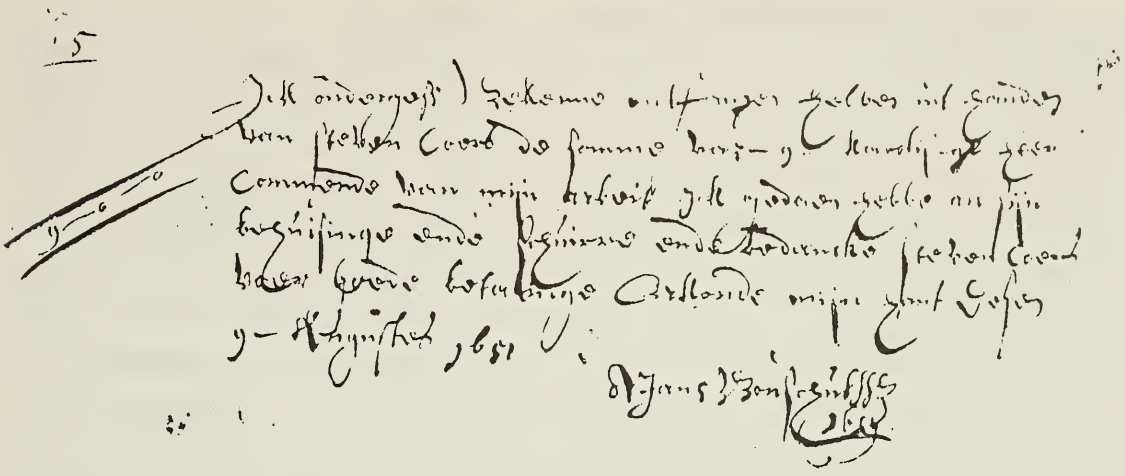


English Translation: 'I have received from Steven Koers for windows I have made in his house 6 'kysersgulden'. Evert Hendrickes'. in margin: '- 1650 - 6 'Caroligulden'.



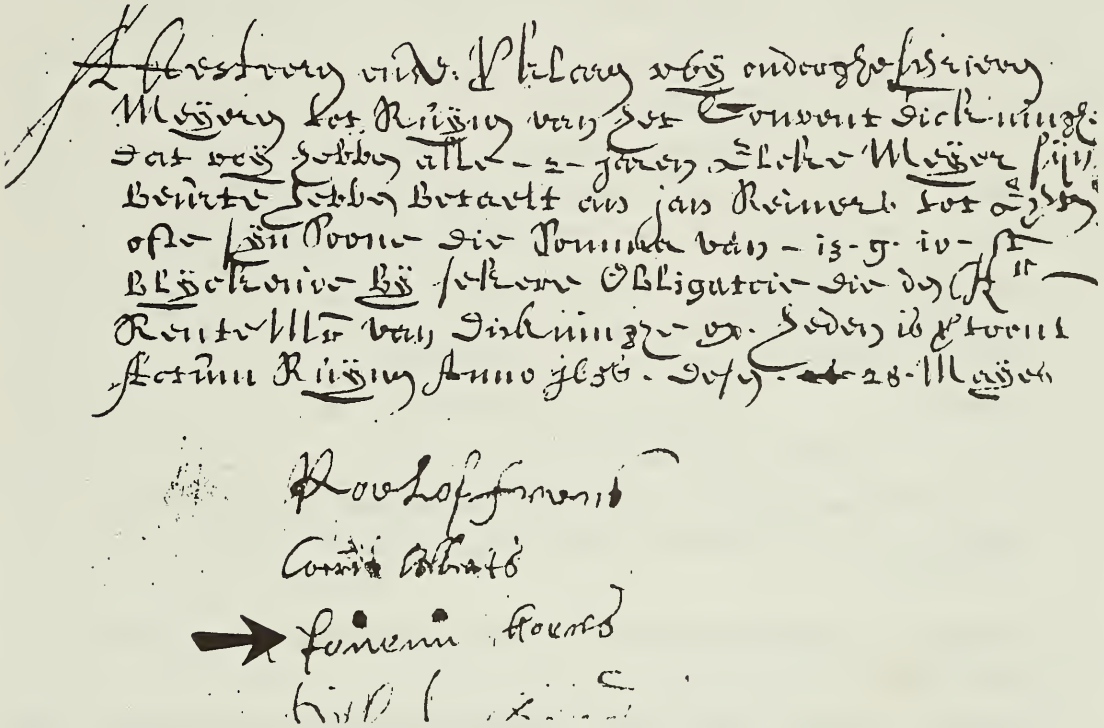
English Translation: 'I, the undersigned, acknowledge to have received from Steven Koers the amount of 9 guilders - 8 stuivers, the guilder 20 stuivers, coming from my labour I carried out for his house and room and thank Steven Koers for good payment. Address my hand — 1650 October 19. Roelof Sueberge.

in margin:	*'guldens'*	*'stuivers'*	*'penningen'*
	9	*8*	*0*



English Translation: 'I, the undersigned, subscribed, acknowledge to have received from Steven Coers the amount of 9 'karolijgulden' coming from my labour I carried out for his housing and barn and thank Steven Coers for good payment. Confirmed by my hand — 1651 August 9. A. Jans Bouschulssz'. in margin: '9 - 0 - 0'.[121]

Under a receipt from 1655 we find the only known signature of Steven Coers before 1660:



English Translation: 'We tenants at Ruijnen from the convent of Dickninghe, undersigned certify and declare that we have paid every two years every tenants-turn to Jan Reimers at (. . .) or his son to the amount of 13 guilders (and) 10 'stuivers' appearing from certain debenture which has been shown to the E. 'rentmeester' of Dickninghe today. Confirmed at Ruynen anno 1655 May 28, Roelof Frens, Coerdt Alberts, Stevenn Koers, Hilbert Geers; in margine: '2 years—1653, 1654 - 13 - 10 - 0'.[122]

From 1658 until 1660 Steven is mentioned as tenant of 'Pol's erve' at Ruinen.[123] Maps 7 through 10 show the location on maps from the land registry of 1832 and as superimposed on modern maps. (Grote topografische atlas Van Nederland, Nord Nederland, Groning, 1987). But we may assume that he lived there as early as 1655. However, the sources are somewhat unclear about this. One list mentions the 'rentmeester' of Dikninge as the tenant of the farm in 1655, 1656 and 1657.[124] But another list mentions the name of Steven Coerts as the tenant of 'Pol's erve' in 1655; his name was deleted however, but it was not replaced by another name.[125] Therefore, the situation is slightly obscure. The most plausible answer to this problem is the suggestion that Steven was a subtenant of the 'rentmeester' of Dikninge from 1655 until 1658. A good argument for assuming that he actually already lived at 'Pol's erve' in 1655 is the fact that in that year he acted as bail for Jan Stevents, tenant of 'Rensinge-erve';[126] and Rensinge practically bordered upon 'Pol's erve'.

Just like the farms at Hees, 'Pol's erve' belonged to the oldest properties of the convent of Dikninge. The farm was situated at the 'Armestraat' just outside the village. With the help of data drawn from several registers from 1645 to 1660, we can reconstruct the size of the farm as follows:

Pol's erve

- house, 8 cross-beams, 25 feet wide
- barn with sheep-fold, 5 cross beams, 18 feet wide
- two vegetable gardens, 1-1/2 'schepel'
- yard with sprouts, 1 'schepel'
- meadow, 3 'schepel'
- 17 'mud' of arable land rented from the convent,
- 5- 'deimt' of meadowland rented from the convent (4 'deimt' in the 'Ostermae' behind 'Polmans house' and 1-1/2 'deimt' in the 'Noerthopen')
- 3 'deimt' of meadowland at Kraloo near the 'Nultingemeat' in private ownership.[127]

Although 'Pol's erve' was slightly smaller than the farms at Hees, it was considered to be a 'full farm'. For the land tax of 1642 the farm was valued at f. 8818.[128] When we compare this with the value of the croftersplace Steven inhabited in 1642, it becomes clear that he had made remarkable improvement within the period 1642–1655. Maybe his second marriage had something to do with this?

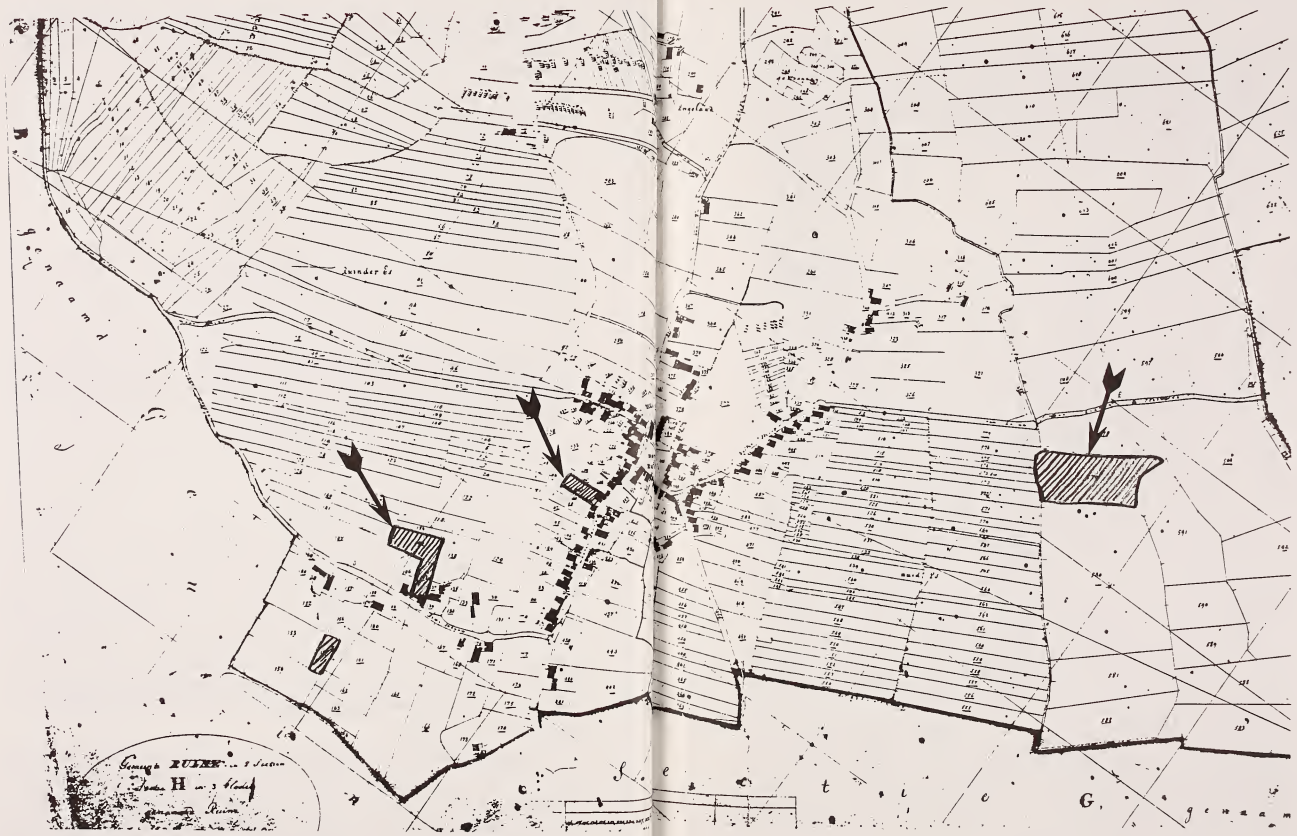
There are several charges concerning Steven Coerts relating to the period 1655–1660. The following charge is from 1659: '(On) 1659 March 31 has Steven Cuers at Ruijnen got by order of Mr. Struck

- 16 boards at 12 'stuivers' each 9 - 12
- 14 boards at 9 'stuivers' each 6 - 6
- (On) May 18 has Steven Cuers at Ruijnen got 16 boards at 10 'stuivers' each 8 - 0
- 9 boards at 12 'stuivers' each 5 - 8
- Jacob Jans 29 - 6[129]

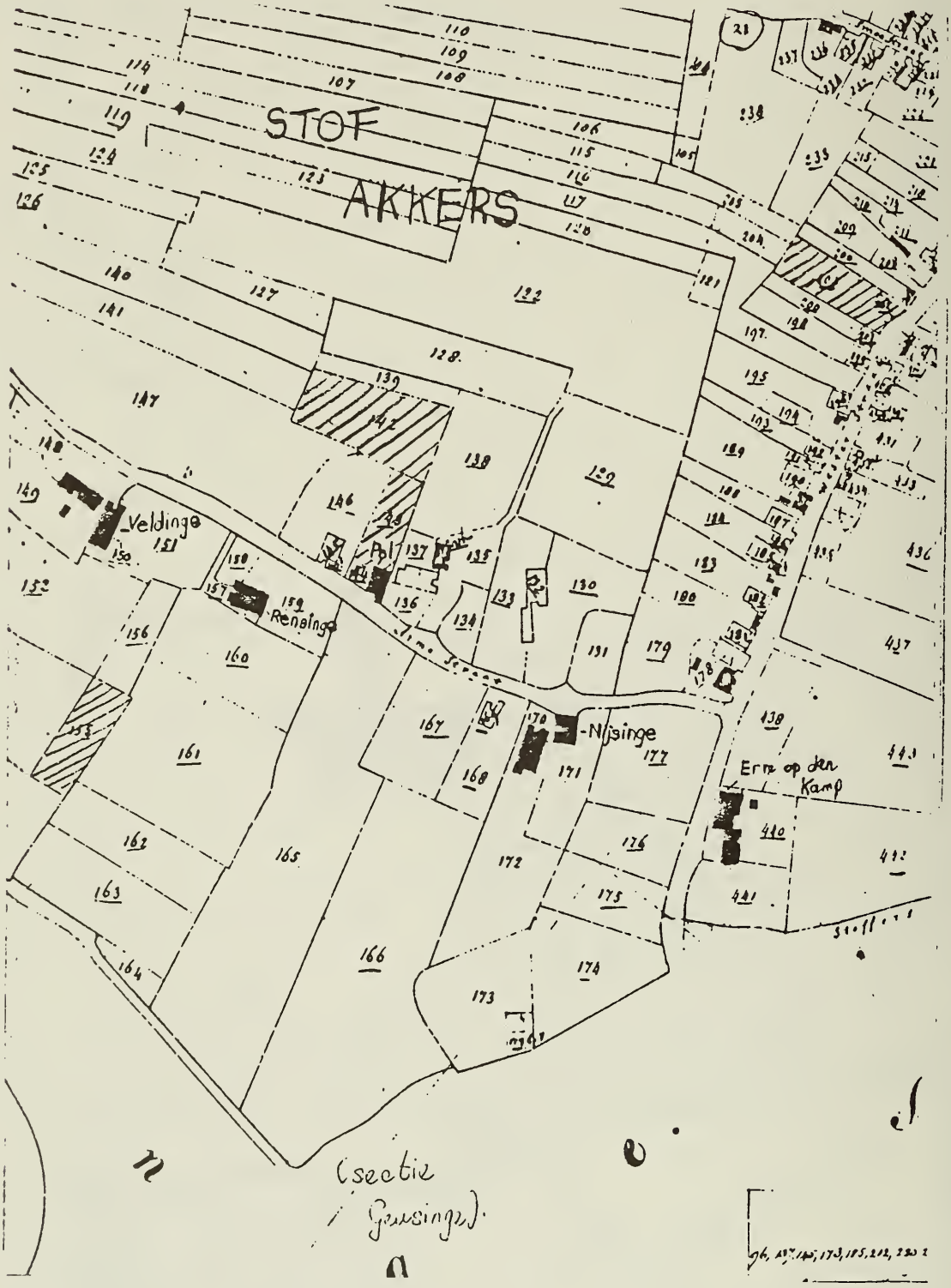
Finally, we turn to Steven's family. It is known already that he was married twice. His first wife was called Aeltje Wessels. We have no information about her parentage. Steven and Aeltje had four children, namely: 1) Wessel, baptized in the 'Oostbuur' on 25 September 1640;[130] he died shortly after his birth and was buried on 14 January 1641 in Meppel,[131] 2) Coert, the oldest son; according to the letters he was born in 1638, 3) Hendrickje; in 1660 she already was married to Jan Kiers, and 4) Marchien, who stayed in Holland and married in 1664. These children were all born about the year 1640. Steven's other (six) children were aged ten or younger in 1660, thus born in 1650 and after. From this we may fairly conclude that he begot his first four children by his first wife, and the other children by his second wife, Willemtje Roelofs Seuberinge, daughter of Roelof Seuberinge from Zwiggelte (for the parentage of Willemtje see Appendix B). The exact date of Aeltje's death is not known. But from the fact that she is not mentioned in the burial registers of the church at Meppel, we can deduce that she was still alive in 1642 and moved with her husband to Ruinen. She probably died soon afterwards. Steven probably remarried about 1648/1649, taking into consideration the time of birth of his younger children. In 1660 Steven, his wife and eight children emigrated to New Netherland. Only his daughter Marchien stayed behind. She was married in 1664 to Roelof Oostinge from Spier, a hamlet near the village of Beilen. The notification of marriage reads as follows (in translation):

'November 1664 The nineteenth Roelef Oostinge, young man from Spier, and Marrichien Stevens young woman from Ruinen, procreated from Steven Cours and the late Aeltjen Wessels, have made public notice of marriage, and the first proclamation will be the twentieth of November.'[132]

The actual marriage took place on 14 December 1664. It is noteworthy that they married in the parish of Ruinerwold. This points at the fact that Marchien had stayed for some years with her family living there, probably one of the sons of Steven's brother Albert (see above). The emigrating



Map 7. Farms at Pol's erve 1832. Land Registry (Ruinen, Sect H, leaf 2)



Map 8. Farms at Pol's erve, 1832 (Detail) (Ruinen, Sect. B Gensinger, leaf 3)

Map 9. Farms at Pol's erve, 1832. Superimposed on modern map. (Grote topografische atlas van Nederland, 1:50.000, 2: Noord-Nederland, Groningen 1987).

Map 10. Farms at Hees and Pol's erve, 1832. Superimposed on modern map. (Grote topografische atlas van Nederland, 1:50.000, 2: Noord-Nederland, Groningen 1987).

family included Jan Kiers, Steven's son-in-law, married to his daughter Hendrickje. It is known from the letters [Ed: See Section IV of this volume] that Jan Kiers owned a house in Steenwijk, a town in the province of Overijssel. In the judicial archives of this town we find two deeds of conveyance concerning this house. In Appendix C the reader will find full transcriptions of them, and a map of Steenwyck (Map 11). I will give a short summary of them here. They show that Jan had bought the house of a certain Lucas Bos; when he did so is not mentioned. The house was situated at the north side of the 'Oosterstraat' in Steenwijk and had a yard that extended to the city ramparts.

The house was burdened with two yearly rents, the so-called 'capittelspacht' (24 'stuivers') and 'memorienpacht' (25 'stuivers').[133] Probably early in 1687[134] Jan sold the house, by way of his proxy agent Hendrick Bouwscholte from Ruinen, to Gerrit Jansen Stoelties and his successor Hendrick Egberts and his wife Jantien Piercks. We get some information about the further financial settlement of the transaction by means of the letter written by Hilbert Coerts in February 1687. The house appeared to be sold already on 9 February of that year, but at high costs.[135]

The exact date of the marriage between Jan and Hendrickje is not known, but given the estimated year of birth of Hendrickje (about 1640), it did not happen much earlier than 1660.[136]

In 1678 in Amsterdam there was made up a notarial act at the request of Jan Kiers. Two of his acquaintances from New Netherland, Paulus Cornelisz van Baeuebrugh and Jan Teunisz van Dyckhuysen appeared before the notary Adriaen van Santen on his behalf, to make a statement about Jan Roeloffsz van Helten, son of Roelof Eltingh from Zwiggelte. I have transcribed the act in full (see Appendix D and Section VI).

We will now return to Voorhees. At the farm Albert te Voorhees was succeeded by his son Coert Alberts in 1662, after they had rented the farm together from 1651 onwards.[137] Coert was married to Swaentien Willems, daughter of Arent Willems, 'pancee' at Dwingeloo. On 13 April 1643 Coert lodged a complaint against his father-in-law and the latter's brother-in-law Coop Hendricx at the 'goosprake' held at Meppel.[138] Coert required of the defenders to deliver to him a proper list and inventory of the inheritance of Swaentien's mother, and further that they include him into the division of the property. Arent Willems and Coop Hendricx declared upon this that they had not refused to deliver the list and inventory, but that Coert had already received the furniture and other movables that were his due, and that the hereditary lands would be transferred. The neighbours judged Coert's claim to be unjust.

On 10 August 1665, Coert was given a certain parcel of 'greenland' at the 'great meadow' being part of the 'Gruijtte', in fee from Henrick Munster Wilhelm van Bernsauw; in 1670 this parcel was released from feudal duty, which then fell on a piece of land situated east of the dike between the bridge and Hees, called the 'Rietyen' (= 'Regien'?).[139]

Coert and Swaentien had seven children, of whom four sons were still alive at the time Hilbert Coerts wrote his first (known) letter: Hilbert, Jan, Albert and Wessel.

Wessel Coerts married a woman from Veninge, a hamlet near the village Zuidwolde. Her name was not known till now. They begot at least three sons; Lucas, Jan and Coert. The family probably lived at Veninge. Coert Wessels later on moved to Zuidwolde. His name appears in a sentence from the 'Etstoel' from 1722, after his uncle Hilbert Coerts and his son Wessel Hilberts had gone to law against Jan Bouschulte (see Appendix E). Jan Wessels became a tenant of the 'landschap', renting a property called 'Achterste klooster' ('the hindmost convent') at Ruinen.[140] Lucas probably stayed at Veninge; in any case he called himself Lucas Wessels Veninge.[141]

Albert Coerts, writer of the letter from 1686 [Ed: See Section IV of this volume], married Aaltyn Coops Addemeraels of Echten, daughter of Coop Luityens, 'schulte' of Echten. They lived at Hoogeveen. They had at least two children: Swaentyn, born in 1683 and Jaeckoby Elysebet, born in 1685. Albert died before 1699. His wife remarried to Egbert Jansen from Spier.[142]

Hilbert Coerts, the oldest of the four brothers, was born in 1644. In 1684 he wrote to New Netherland that he had moved to a newly built house in the 'Regien'. Where he had lived before is unclear; in any case he did not rent Voorhees, because 'at the old place' his brother Jan succeeded their father in 1677.[143] However, it is possible that he lived with them for some years. Though Hilbert wrote about a new house, it is not impossible that he had just extended an older family property, or at least built his house on the same spot. Remember the crofters house of Steven Coerts that was moved to the 'Regien', and which was used as building material for a barn there. Moreover, his father had some land in fee there. In 1674 Hilbert was given the same land in fee from H.M.W. van Bernsauw; this was confirmed anew in 1683 by the next lord of Ruinen, the Count of Schellart. In 1690 the 'Rietyen' was freed from feudal duties. The register of the 'haardstedengeld' from 1692 mentions that Hilbert went to the 'Regien' with two horses. Some years later he is mentioned to possess three horses.[144] So, Hilbert rented or possessed a middlesized farm. However, the registers mention too that he was a brewer! In any case, we may reckon him to belong to the more

well-to-do of Ruinen, which also appears from the fact that he was appointed several times to be one of the churchwardens of Ruinen.[145]

According to the letters, Hilbert was married twice. We only know the name of one of his wives, Geertje Hendriks. Hilbert had six children: five sons, called Hendrick, Coert (born in 1691), Albert, Roelof and Wessel, and a daughter called Zyeghyn.[146]

In 1720 Hilbert Coerts and his son Wessel Hilberts came into conflict with a certain Jan Bouschulte, about the slaughtering of some animals. In 1721 they were sentenced by the court, but in 1722 they gave notice of appeal. The decision of the 'Etstoel' with reference to this appeal has been translated in full (see Appendix E).

Zyeghyn Hilberts was married in 1694 to Jan Dulman. They had four children, who were still underage when Zyeghyn died in 1709. For that reason there was made up a guardian account by Hilbert Coerts, he being the main guardian. The account also contains an inventory of the possessions of Zyeghyn and Jan Dulman. I have transcribed this inventory and part of the rest of the guardian account, because it gives a reasonable insight into the material position not only of this family, but of the other families connected with the farms at Hees too. (See Appendix F)

Jan Coerts took over Voorhees from his father in 1677 and lived there until 1708. In that year he moved to the 'Regien'. Before he left, he became involved in a dragging lawsuit, after he had been accused of having transported some wagon loads of dung, property of the 'landschap', to his own fields. The dossier of this lawsuit has come down to us intact. The first part of it has been transcribed in full (see Appendix G).

Jan was married to a daughter of Jan Vrericks van Nuyl. Her first name is unknown. They had at least six children. Unfortunately, we know only two names with certainty: a son Coert Jans, who stayed in the 'Regien' and a daughter Swaantje Jans. Like his brother Hilbert, Jan was appointed several times to be one of the churchwardens of Ruinen.[147] Swaantje Jans married Hendrick Remmelts. In what year this marriage took place is unknown, but certainly before 1702, because in that year they were received as a couple in the church of Ruinen.[148] Hendrick was a son of Remmelt Hendriks, who rented Voorhees from 1709 until 1713, though his son used the farm already during these years. From 1714 onwards Hendrick Remmelts rented Voorhees himself, and he did so until 1750.[149] Hendrick and Swaantje had five children: three sons, called Frans, Remmelt and Jan, and two daughters, called Grietje and Lammegien.[150]

In 1751 the 'landschap' sold the farms at Hees, thus including Voorhees, 'bij beklemming'. This meant that the buyers got the right to use the

farms eternally and hereditary, but in return for that right had to pay to the 'landschap' an invariable yearly payment for the deed of conveyance and the conditions of the 'beklemming' (see Appendix H; Notarisarchief Kymmell, 1815-9.) Voorhees was bought 'bij beklemming' by Hilbert Vrericks in 1751.[151] He had to pay the 'landschap' 500 'caroliguldens' once and a yearly amount of 139 'caroliguldens'. It is not entirely certain if he was connected to the family that lived on the farm before. He married a certain Marrigien Jans van Nuyl in 1718. She could have been a daughter of Jan Vrericks van Nuyl and thus a sister of the wife of the above mentioned Jan Coerts. Another possibility (and a better one) is that she was a daughter of Jan Coerts himself and thus a sister of the above mentioned Swaantje Jans, and had taken the name of her mother's family (Van Nuyl) after her father had died in 1717. In any case, Hilbert lived on Voorhees until 1768. He and Marrigien had eight children: four sons, called Harm, Steven, Vrerick and Jan, and three daughters, called Ida, Jentien and Aaltien. The name of the other child is unknown.[152]

In 1769 Voorhees was taken over by Harm Hendriks de Wit.[153] As far as is known until now, he was not connected with the former inhabitants of the farm. He stayed there until 1795, when the farm was taken over by Jan Jans Duim. He rented the farm until at least 1809.[154]

In July 1807 the 'landschap' sold the property of the the farmyard Voorhees to the Lord Reint Hendrik de Vos van Steenwijk, living on the Havixhorst. The deed of conveyance was already made up in 1751 (See Appendix. H.2). However, the contract stipulated that the actual handing over of the farmyard should not take place before the complete amount of the purchase money was paid. This only was the case in 1807. The deed of conveyance stipulated that the 'beklemde' farmer from this time onwards had to pay 140 'guldens' to the above mentioned Lord. The exact point of time when Jan Jans Duim left Voorhees is unknown until now, but it certainly was not very long after 1809, because already in 1815 the 'beklemde' farmer at Voorhees, then a certain Harm Duizenkunst, sold the farm to Albert de Vriese (see Appendix H.1). Some time after 1832, the farm was taken over by Jan Luchies Nysing. In the year 1882, the register of real property mentions that Voorhees did not exist anymore. About 1875 Jan Luchies Nysing had built a new house near the place of the old farm.[155]

C2: The Middelhees branch

After Coert had moved from Middelhees to Voorhees about 1600, the former farm was taken over by his son Jan Coerts and a certain Willem. About the latter there is some doubt, mainly because we never find his name in connection with a patronymicum. Like Albert, Jan and Steven he

may have been a son of Coert, but likewise it is possible that he was a son of the Jan Middelhees who rented the farm until at least 1575. In that case he would fit very well into the 'Willem-Jan-Willem line' at Middelhees throughout the sixteenth century. In any case, Willem is mentioned as the tenant of Middelhees until 1620. We do not have any indication about children; except maybe Hendrick Willems in de Oosterkluft, acting as guarantor for Steven Coerts in 1642 (?).

Jan Coerts is mentioned for the first time as the tenant of Middelhees in a register of the convent dating from 1602, which among other things shows that he still held in security the two arable fields at the 'Zuid-Es' at Ruinen, because the cellarer of Dikninge was indebted to him for an amount of 40 gold guilders.[156]

Like his brother Albert at Voorhees, Jan was a very regular appearance in the accounts of the 'rentmeester' of Dikninge after their beginning in 1619.[157] Most of these records, however, concern minor charges, not worthy to be described here in extension. Of greater interest is the conflict between the convent and a few preachers of Ruinen, which led to the arrest of Jan in Steenwijk in 1624. As described before, part of the revenues of the convent was used to pay alimonies to a number of preachers in Drenthe. But in the parish of Ruinen a lasting settlement in this matter was preceded by a serious conflict.

In 1614 the tenants of Dikninge complained to 'Drost and Deputies' of Drenthe about Patroclus Romelinck, preacher in Ruinen since 1601, because he had taken away part of their revenue for a few years, on the pretext of would-be mutual obligations between him and the convent. This was declared unlawful by Drost and Deputies, and they decided that the preacher be maintained by all inhabitants of Ruinen.[158] Patroclus, however, persevered in his actions, supported in this by the lord of Ruinen, notwithstanding several warnings from Drost and Deputies. In 1621 the conflict took on a further dimension, for in that year Patroclus Romelinck abdicated in Ruinen and had to be replaced. This meant that a conflict about the advowson was added to the other conflict. The right to appoint the preacher of Ruinen had always been a prerogative belonging to the convent of Dikninge. After the secularization of the convent, Drost and Deputies, being successors in all rights that the convent formerly possessed, appropriated the advowson too. In this they were resisted by the lord of Ruinen, who pushed Gerardus ab Essen to the fore. Gerardus was arrested twice by order of Drost and Deputies, but they had to let him go. He actively continued the illegal actions started by Patroclus Romelinck. Already in 1621 the tenants of Dikninge complained about the fact that the illegally functioning preacher at Ruinen had seized their rye.[159]

The conflict dragged along for some years. Then, on 3 March 1624, the records of Dikninge mention that the 'rentmeester' at that time, Gerhardus Struick, went to Steenwijk to examine why Jan Coerts, tenant of Dikninge, was arrested there. It appeared that this had happened at the instigation of Gerhardus ab Essen, who claimed that Jan owed him 25 'mud' of rye. As bail and proxy for Jan Coerts was appointed a certain Claes Jans. An interim sentence turned out to the disadvantage of Jan Coerts. On 10 April Gerhardus Struick was charged by 'Drost and Deputies' to go to Zwolle to lodge a complaint by the Estates of Overijssel about the course of events.[160] But all this did not matter; Jan and his superiors lost their case, for on 12 May 1624 the sentence books of the 'schoutambt' Steenwijk mention that the sentence between Gerhardus ab Essen and Jan had become effective,[161] and the records of Dikninge mention on 5 June that the 'rentmeester' had sent the 25 'mud' of rye to Steenwijk.[162]

Whom Jan was married to is unknown, but it is very well possible that his wife originally came from Lhee, a hamlet near Dwingeloo. For their sons had a serious conflict in 1646 and 1647 about some parental goods situated there, and it is not unlikely that these were brought in by their mother. If this was the case, she had presumably died in or shortly before 1633, for on 5 May of that year the goods at Lhee were sold.[163] Her husband died around 1638.[164] They had at least four children, called Jan, Coert, Hendrick and Geert.

Jan Janss 'Mettelhees' married Wolterien Jacobs in 1640. She was the widow of Roelef Meuleman, baker in Meppel.[165] Jan and Wolterien lived in Meppel, based upon their mention in the church registers of Meppel as members of the church of that city.[166]

Coert Jansen probably lived at Steenwijk. At any rate, he owned a house there, situated at the east side of the 'Markt' and at the corner of the 'Kleine Kerkstraat' (see map 11). A barn and a plot with a little cottage were part of the property. In 1655 Coert sold the house cum annexis to Hendrick Coenderts and his wife Swaentien Hendricks (for a full transcription of the deed of conveyance see Appendix I). In 1646 Coert is mentioned as a juror of the 'Oosterkluft' in Steenwijk.[167] Apart from his house in Steenwijk Coert owned some arable land at 'de Hucht' in the parish of Ruinerwold, consisting of seven 'mud', 3 'schepel', 3 'spint' and 12 'roeden', half of them lying waste.[168] Finally, the register of the land tax from 1642 mentions him having a crofters house with vegetable garden and 2 'schepel' of land in Ruinen.[169]

Court was married twice. His first wife was Arentien Janss. She died about 1650, for on 28 June of that year there was made up an act in which Court van Heess, intending to marry for the second time, and Evert Roelofs

and Coop Cents, guardians of the minor children Grietien, Hendrick and Willem Courts declared that they had made up an inventory of the possessions; further that Court would properly take care of his children until they were grown up, and at that time he should pay each of his children out of their mother's goods one third of 450 'gulden'. His house at the northern side of the 'Woltstraat' in Steenwijk served as security.[170] Coert and his second wife, whose name is unknown, probably died in or shortly before 1658, for on 7 December of that year Gerryt Alberts and Andries Fransen were appointed as guardians of Hendrick Courts van Hees.[171]

Hendrick and Geert took over Middelhees after their father's death about 1638. They rented the farm together until 1649. From 1649 until 1658 Geert rented the farm with his son Hilbert Geerts. From 1658 onwards Hilbert rented the farm on his own.[172]

Hendrick further is mentioned in the register of the land tax of 1642 of Dwingeloo, as the owner of a house and yard plus 2-1/2 'mud' and 3 'spint' of arable land, 1 3/4 'deimt' of meadowland and 3/4 share in the common lands; house and landed property were situated at Lhee.[173] Maybe they were an unsold part of the parental goods mentioned above. His brother Geert is mentioned in 1641 as long leaseholder of two farmyards. One of these was situated at Haakswold in the parish of Blijdenstede (= Ruinerwold). It enclosed 15 'mud', 3 'schepel', 3 'spint' and 10 'roeden'. The other was situated at Haar near Yhorst in the province of Overijssel. No figure about the size of this farm is available.[174]

As is mentioned above, in 1646 a conflict broke out between the brothers in which the parental goods at Lhee played a part. It started on 5 May, 1646 when Geert Jans for himself and for his brother's children, required from Coert Jans in court that he repay an amount that he had borrowed on interest.[175] Apparently, the repayment had been long in coming, for on 23 November Dr. ten Broeke, acting as proxy for Hendrick and Geert cum suis, demanded repayment of the money again. This time the amount was mentioned: 250 golden guilders.[176] On 8 December the brothers apparently had reached an agreement, for Coert promised in court to repay the money within six weeks.[177] But Coert did not keep his promise and, on the contrary, on 3 April 1647 required in his turn payment of 100 'rijksdaalders' that his brothers owed to him, in his opinion.[178] Seemingly, the brothers had spoken before about a settlement that resolved both cases by way of putting them together. This must have happened early in January, for there is a deposition of some witnesses dating from 19 January.[179] In any case, Geert assailed such a settlement, firstly because it was incompatible with the 'Landlaw' of Drenthe, and secondly because it was reached

in drunkenness[180]: according to the witnesses, they were a little bit squiffy indeed, but not really drunk.[181] Geert, therefore, demanded immediate payment of the 250 golden guilders, half of it to himself, and the other half to the children of Hendrick.

Apparently Coert finally paid, for the problem of the 250 golden guilders disappeared from the books. The other problem about the 100 'rijksdaalders' however, dragged along. It had arisen from the sale of some parental goods at Lhee in 1633. These goods had been estimated before sale at 1000 golden guilders. On 19 October 1647 Coert claimed that before the sale an agreement had been reached that he share in the money the goods would realize above the said 1000 golden guilders, and that they were sold for approximately 1500 golden guilders.[182] He further claimed that Geert and Hendrick's children possessed two deeds of conveyance concerning the sale, of which he required a copy.[183] In early November Roelof Hendricx Slump, acting as proxy for Geert Jans and the children of Hendrick Jans, declared that his principals did not know anything about the deeds at issue; they admitted that some deeds had been drawn up, but they were willing to declare under oath that they did not know where they had been left.[184] Moreover, they produced two receipts: in the first one, dating from May 5, 1633 Coert acknowledged that he had received 900 'dalers'; as part of his inheritance, which amounted to 1000 'daler': the second one showed that Coert had received the remaining 100 'daler' in 1634. Geert and the children of Hendrick therefore found that Coert had gotten all the money he had a right to.[185] Apparently after this the conflict was settled amicably, for we do not read anymore about it.

To whom Hendrick and Geert were married is unknown. But we do know approximately when they died. Hendrick is mentioned for the last time in November 1646; from March 1647 onwards the sources constantly name 'the children of Hendrick'. He apparently died between these two dates. Geert probably died about 1657/1658, for in 1658 he was succeeded at Middelhees by his son Hilbert Geerts (149). Hilbert Geerts rented Middelhees until his death in 1685, although, according to the letters, [Ed. See Section IV of this volume] he had already moved to Ruinen to live with his youngest son in May 1684. The name of his wife is unknown. They had two sons, of whom the oldest son, Geert Hilberts, took over the farm.[186] In 1680 Geert married Jentjen Wolters from the 'Oostbuur'.[187] They had three children, one son and two daughters.[188] In 1703 Middelhees was taken over by Jacob Michiels, who was married to Geert's daughter Geesjen. They had nine children.[189] Jacob rented the farm until 1750.[190] In 1751 Middelhees, like Voorhees, was sold 'bij beklemming'. The buyer was

Roelof Jacobs, son of Jacob Michiels.[191] In 1760 the farm was taken over by Jan Hendriks van Voorhees, son of Hendrik Hendrik Remmelts van Voorhees and Swaantje Jans.[192] Jan Hendriks married Hendrikje Jans van Dwingelo on 24 January 1745.[193] Jan probably died reasonably young, because from 1765 until 1799 his widow is mentioned as the owner of the farm.[194] Jan and Hendrikje had six children. A daughter, Hillegien, married Albert Willems Westerhuis from Avereest on 5 January 1783.[195] They took over Middelhees in 1800.[196] In 1825 they sold the farm to Albert Jans Joosten,[197] who still owned it in 1832.

C3: The Achterhees branch

Of the three farms at Hees, Achterhees clearly is the one about which we have the least information. After Jan Achterhees died in 1581, the situation was wrapped in darkness for some decades. A Hendrick is mentioned in 1592, but it remains uncertain if he really rented the farm or was just a servant (see above).

The fog lifts only from 1614 onwards. The farm was rented then by Coert te Achterhees, or Coert Hilbers, and used by his father Hilbert Achterhees.[198] We may assume that Hilbert had rented Achterhees for some time before 1614, and we can take it for granted that he was the same person as the Hilbrandt or Hilbert who for some time lived at Voorhees. Hilbert is mentioned as the user of Achterhees until 1620; he probably died in or shortly before that year.

Like his colleagues at Voorhees and Middelhees, Coert Hilbers is a regular appearance in the records of the 'rentmeester' of Dikninge. None of these accounts are of much interest, however, being mostly charges in connection with minor repairs.[199] Coert rented Achterhees until 1642; in that year he was succeeded by his son Hilbert Coerts. Thus Coert probably died about 1642.[200] Coert, as far as we know, had one brother, called Jan Hilbers. He is mentioned in 1634, being a soldier in the army of Captain Antonius Polman.[201]

Hilbert Coerts also turns up regularly in the records of the'rentmeester'. In his case, however, some accounts are more interesting, because they demonstrate that he had financial problems several times. The first time this happened was in 1645, caused by liverrot among his horses, of which a few died. By way of two petitions, dating from December 1645 and February 1647, Hilbert asked for extension of payment. Both requests were agreed to.[202] An account from 1653 shows that Hilbert was in arrears of his rent then for 800 'carolusgulden'. 'Drost an Deputies' gave remission for 200 'carolusgulden', and Hilbert could pay back the other 600 in three instalments.[203] Apparently, this settlement was insufficient to solve the problem

for in 1655 'Drost and Deputies' decided, after a new request of Hilbert, that a further remission was out of the question, but that he could refund yearly 100 guilders of his arrears.[204] But this settlement, too, was not sufficient, for in 1658 the arrears still amounted to 500 'carolusgulden'. Hilbert was granted three instalments again, but now under the condition that he had sufficient bail and that he would stick strictly to the instalments.[205] Finally, in 1661 the records of the 'rentmeester' mention that Hilbert could rent Achterhees for a next term, provided that he had sufficient bail and would stick to the terms of the lease.[206]

In 1665 and 1666 Hilbert rented the farm together with his son-in-law Geerlich Hermans, married to Hilbert's daughter Femmetje. From 1667 onwards Geerlich rented the farm on his own.[207] Femmetje probably died about 1670, for in 1671 Geerlich married Aeltje Jans, daughter of Jan Jans from Haakswold.[208] They had at least one child, born in 1683. Unfortunately, its name is not mentioned.[209] Geerlich rented Achterhees until 1683. In 1684 the farm was taken over by a certain Luigien Albarts Smits, a son of Albert Jans, in his turn a son of Jan Hilberts (the soldier) and a nephew of the above mentioned Hilbert Coerts. Luigien rented the farm until 1708. The next tenant was Roelof Alberts, brother-in-law of Luigien. He stayed at Achterhees until 1732 and was succeeded by his son Berent Roelofs, who rented Achterhees until 1737.[210]

After this date, the connection between the succeeding tenants becomes obscure for a number of years. Berent Roelofs was succeeded by Lambert Jans (1738-1743), who in his turn was succeeded by Jacob Reints (1744-1750). In 1751 the 'landschap' sold Achterhees (like Voorhees and Middelhees) 'bij beklemming' for 500 'caroliguldens' once and 139 'caroliguldens' yearly. The buyer was a certain Jan Hendriks Scholten van Pesse, a village nearby Ruinen. He stayed with his son at the farm until 1768.[211] In 1769 the farm was bought by Niesje Wessels, daughter of Wessel Hilberts Noordhuis in the 'Regien' (and thus a granddaughter of Hilbert Coerts, writer of the letters), and widow of Cent Jans Coeling, possibly a son of Jan Coerts van Voorhees. Cent Jans and Niesje were married in 1734, and had lived in Ansen, a hamlet near Ruinen. Niesje died in the same year in which she bought Achterhees. The farm was inherited by her children, who were still underage when she died. Then, from 1775 until 1780 the farm was used by her daughter Aeltien and her husband Harm Jans Hof (Segeringe), from 1781 until 1787 by her son Jan Pauwels Cents and from 1788 until 1806 by her daughter Swaentien Cents and her husband Gerrit Cornelis. Gerrit died about 1807, and Swaentien used Achterhees alone for a while.[212] In 1832 Achterhees was owned by a certain Jan Jans Santinge.[213]

The Reasons for Emigration

Why did they go? That is the question, which arises when reading that in the mid-seventeenth century about one hundred people left the province of Drenthe, situated at the periphery of the United Provinces, to undertake the long voyage to New Netherland and start a new life there. [Ed. See Section III of this volume] It is a question that cannot be answered to our entire satisfaction yet, because we (still) lack direct indications. But it is possible to speculate to some extent. I will suggest some possible incentives, which considered by themselves are not reason enough, but in combination may well have formed the greater part of the motivation to go.

In the first place, I wish to consider the economic situation.Some research has been done into the seventeenth century economic cycle of Drenthe. The results show a decline starting about 1650, after a period of upward movement from 1625 until 1650. The break about 1650 marked the beginning of a long depression lasting until 1750, with declining earnings, increasing costs of production and a growing burden of taxation. Particularly the tenants went through bad times, those around Ruinen included.[214] In this respect I may remind the reader of the problems of the farmers at Hees: in 1659, for instance, Albert Coerts te Voorhees drew up a petition for the repairs of his house, barn and sheep-fold, 'before these had totally fallen into decay'; and maybe an even better example is the financial difficulties of Hilbert Coerts te Achterhees.

A second possible incentive was, at least for Steven Coerts and for Jan Kiers, the fact that they were 'free brothers', that is that they had not inherited parental goods. We have seen what this meant for Steven Coerts; he lived at least at three different places before he went to America. For men like him the idea to permanently own a farm of reasonable size must have had great attraction.

This leads us to another question: who or what suggested the idea to them? In this respect the person of Theodorus Polhemius (Polheim) is of great interest. He descended from the Paltz, an area in Germany. From 1624–1627 he served as a preacher in Gieten, a village in northern Drenthe.[215] From 1627–1634 he preached in Meppel (being a 'second preacher'), and at the same time acted as rector and preceptor of the Latin school in this town.[216] He was married to Catharina van Werven, and on 7 October 1629 his second child, a daughter called Christina, was baptized.[217] The family lived in Meppel, in a house rented from Wolter Jans.[218] Polhemius had close contacts with the convent of Dikninge, for in 1627 'Ridderschap en Eigenerfden' of Drenthe decided that he be maintained from the revenues of

this institution (See Appendix J).[219] The accounts of the 'rentmeester' contain yearly receipts signed by Polhemius. After his stay in Meppel he preached from 1638 to 1654 in the Dutch colonial possessions in Brazil. In 1654 he fled to New Netherland, and became the first preacher at Midwout, Nieuw-Amersfoort and Breuckelen. He died there in 1676.[220] It is very well possible that he, by way of letters or otherwise, was the person who propagated the idea of emigration among the farmers in Drenthe. Some of the emigrants may even have been old acquaintances (especially those from Meppel: for example Steven Coerts, who had probably lived somewhere near Meppel for some time). Apart from Polhemius, there were some other immigrants coming from Drenthe who arrived in New Netherland before 1660. The first known was Jan Claessen from Meppel in 1642. Maybe more important is the first group immigration from Drenthe, around 1650. Among these immigrants were some members of the family Strycker from Ruinen. Like Polhemius, they may very well have maintained relations with relatives and friends who stayed behind. Especially interesting in this respect are Jan Strycker and his wife Lammertje Seuberingh, a sister of Willemtje Roelofs Seuberingh, wife of Steven Coerts!

Another person that may have contributed to the idea, at least where it concerns Steven Coerts and his family, was Wessel Alberts, Steven's nephew; living at Bicker's island in Amsterdam he could practically see the ships leave port.

At that time Amsterdam was the centre of the navigation and trade to New Netherland. Without any doubt, there were rumours about the 'new world', especially near the harbours where Wessel Alberts lived. And very possibly there were not only rumours, but more direct information too. The city of Amsterdam had her own colony, 'Nieuwer Amstel' on the Delaware, and we know Amsterdam advertised to some extent to get the colony populated. This may have aroused interest not only for 'Nieuwer Amstel', but for the Hudson area too. Interesting in this respect is a contract dating from 19 March 1650 between the Amsterdam Chamber of the West India Company on the one part, and Adriaen van der Donck, Jacob van Couwenhoven and Jan Evertsen Bout, on the other part.[221] The most interesting item in this contract is that the three above mentioned persons committed themselves to convey to New Netherland the number of 200 passengers, of which 100 were to be farmers and farm servants, and the remaining 100 such as the Amsterdam Chamber was accustomed to send over. The said contract in itself had nothing to do with the voyage of Steven Coerts and his family. But it could give us a clue to the answer on the question how their emigration was organized. However, more research is needed here.

Hees—20th Century and 17th Century

Several photographs of modern Hees and of 17th Century Museum exhibits are presented in Photos 1 to 7. These were taken in April, 1984 by Manning W. Voorhees during a trip to the Netherlands by members of the Van Voorhees Association. This trip, and the interest it stimulated in searching the available information sources, led to the research summarized in this section.

One can see the pastoral nature of the farming area and the similarity of today's farm buildings to those of 300 years ago.

Photo 1 Sign at the street intersection for the village of Hees and one of the several working farms at Hees.

Photo 2 View of the Voorhees farm as it exists and is worked today. The Voorhees farm borders the street of Hees and the post at the bottom of the picture is part of a fence that runs along the street.

Photo 3 View of the Voorhees farm from a different perspective. The fence along the street and the street are shown.

Photo 4 Seventeenth Century Drenthe farmhouse at the Netherlands Open-Air Museum (Het Nederlands Openlucht-museam) at Arnhem. The farmhouse is from Zeijen, near Assen. The front part of the structure is for farming implements and animals, which living quarters in the rear. Animals and family shared the long building, which was a very practical arrangement in bad weather. Mother could attend to the children and watch over the valuable livestock at the same time. It has a thatched roof. The 17th Century farmhouse bears a similarity to the farmhouse of today.

Photo 5 Day laborers' cabin from Onstwedde in Groningen. While there were relatively few of these sod-covered huts in Drenthe as contrasted with Friesland and Groningen, they did exist and the poorer farm workers lived in them. The cabin is next to the 17th Century Drenthe farmhouse at the Arnhem Open-Air Museum.

Photo 6 Inside of the 17th Century Drenthe farmhouse at the Netherlands Open-Air Museum at Arnhem. Tools, implements and animals were kept in this part of the building. The living quarters for the family were at the rear of the structure, and there is an open line of vision from these quarters into the animal portion. The "cross-beams" used by Drs. Wijmer to describe the farmhouses at Hees can be seen clearly.

Photo 7 Inside of the 17th Century Drenthe farmhouse at the family end. The room has a fireplace and several bed boxes on the two walls not shown, as well as other pieces of furniture. There is an area on the floor for little children to play. The door leads to the outside.

Photo 1. Modern Hees (1984)

Photo 2. The Voorhees Farm at Hees (1984)

Photo 3. The Voorhees Farm (1984)

Photo 4. 17th Century Drenthe Farmhouse (Netherlands Open-Air Museum, Arnhem).

Photo 5. 17th Century Laborer's Cabin (Netherlands Open-Air Museum, Arnhem).

Photo 6. 17th Century Drenthe Farmhouse (Netherlands Open-Air Museum, Arnhem).

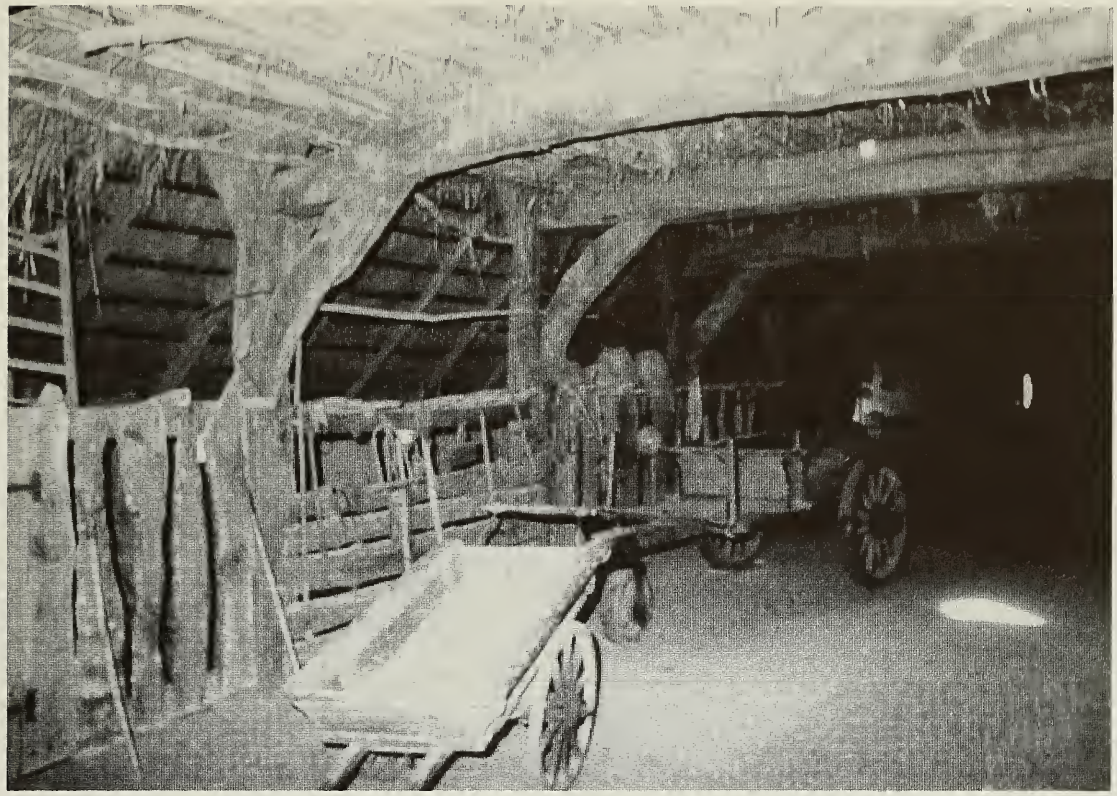


Photo 7. 17th Century Drenthe Farmhouse (Netherlands Open-Air Museum, Arnhem).

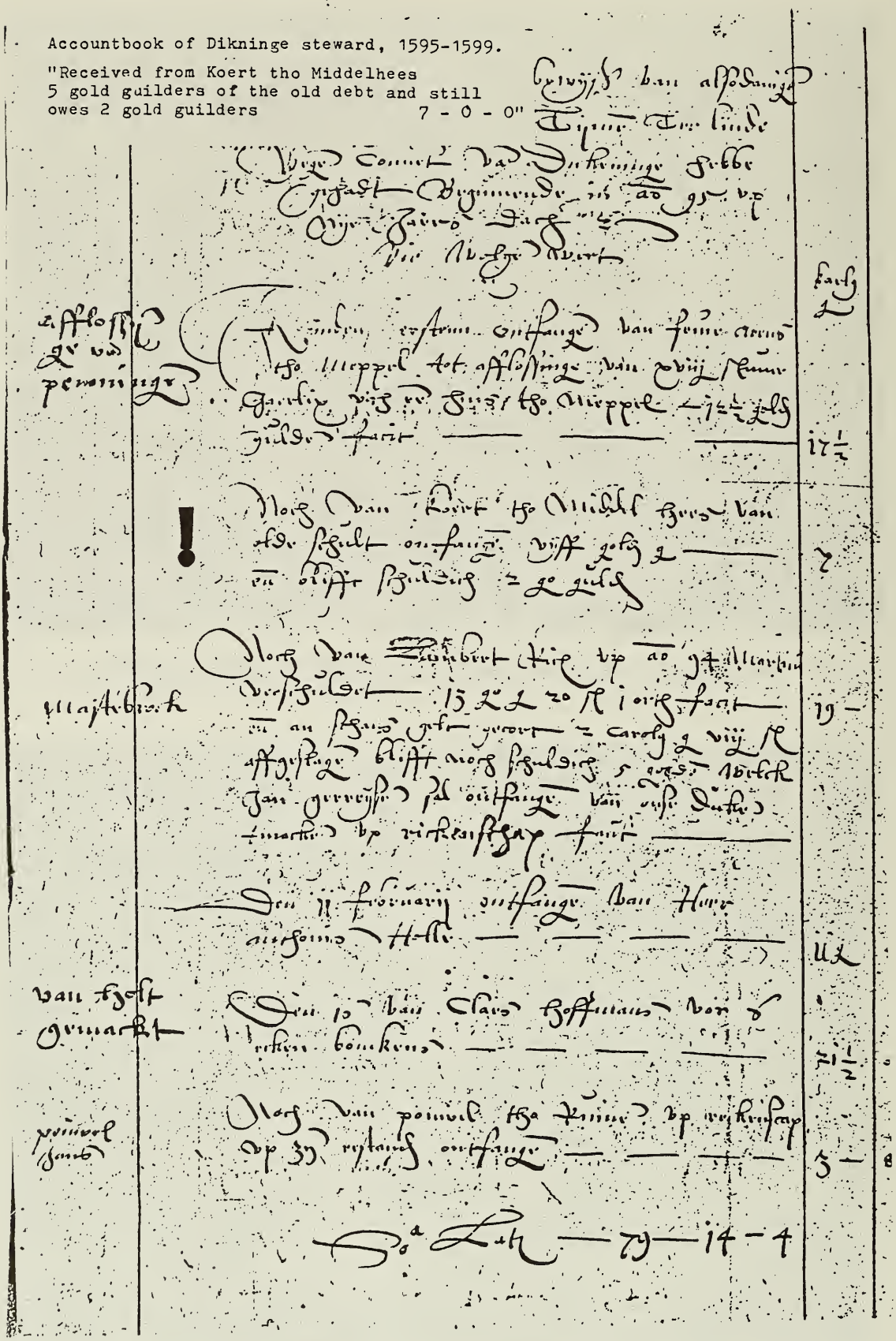
Selected Records

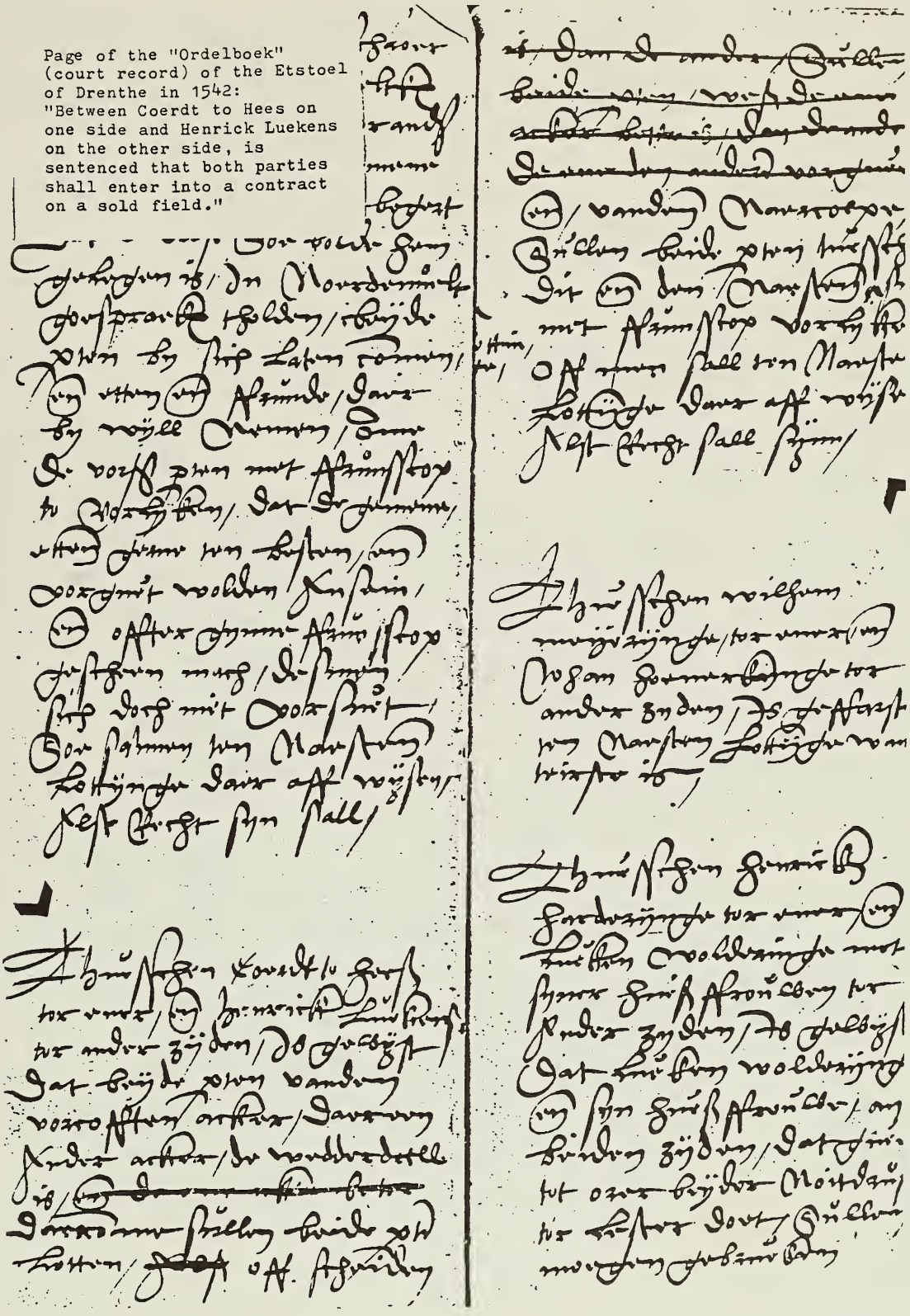
Copies of several records of court records, account books and land-tax records spanning the period of 1542 to 1658 are reproduced here to illustrate the form of records available. It is pertinent that these selections were among those shown to the Van Voorhees family members touring the Netherlands in 1984 and which excited the interest that led to the research and chronicle of this report.

These and other reproductions in this volume also illustrate the challenges in deciphering and translating these records from the old Dutch.

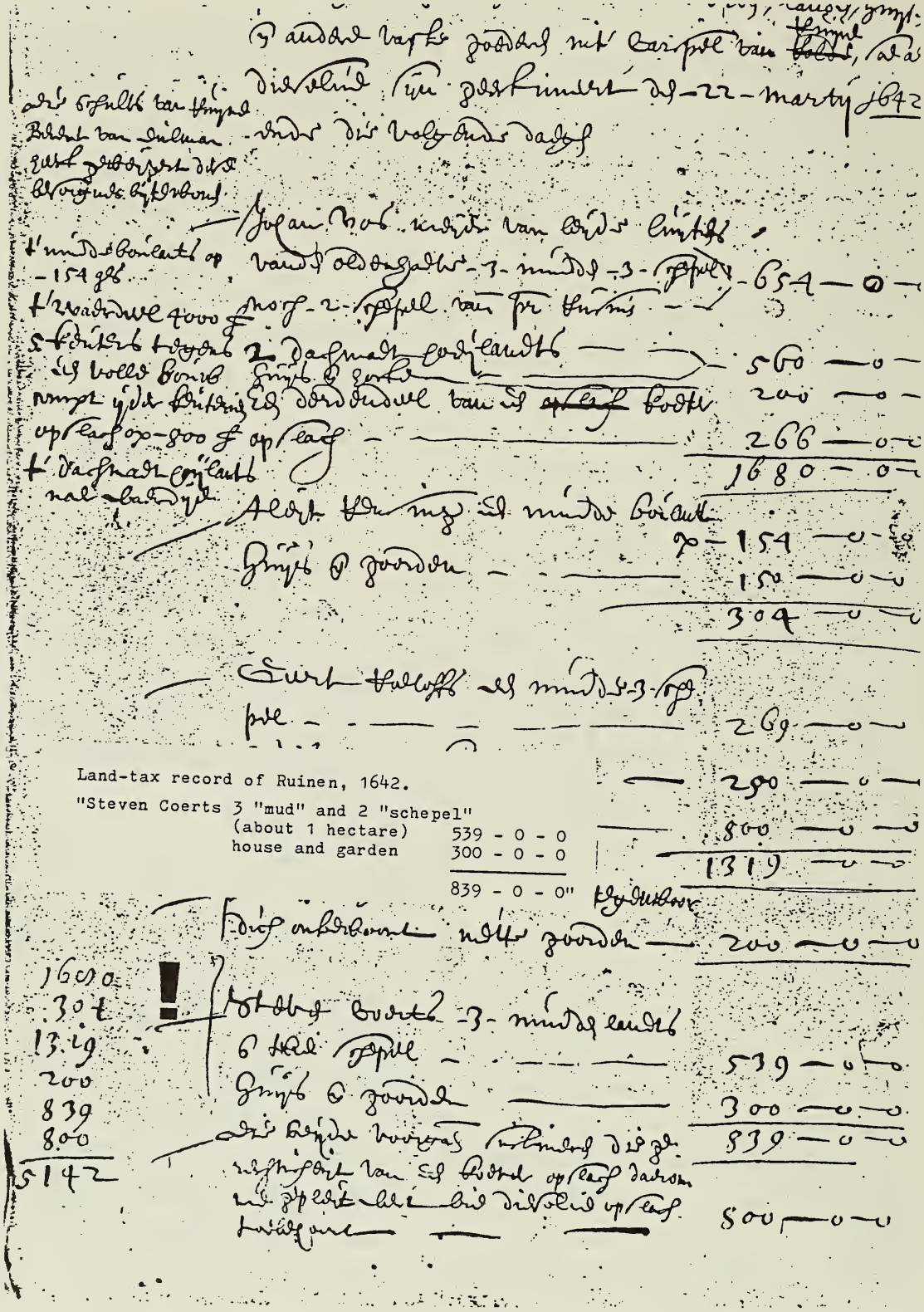
Accountbook of Dikninge steward, 1595-1599.

"Received from Koert tho Middelhees
5 gold guilders of the old debt and still
owes 2 gold guilders 7 - 0 - 0"





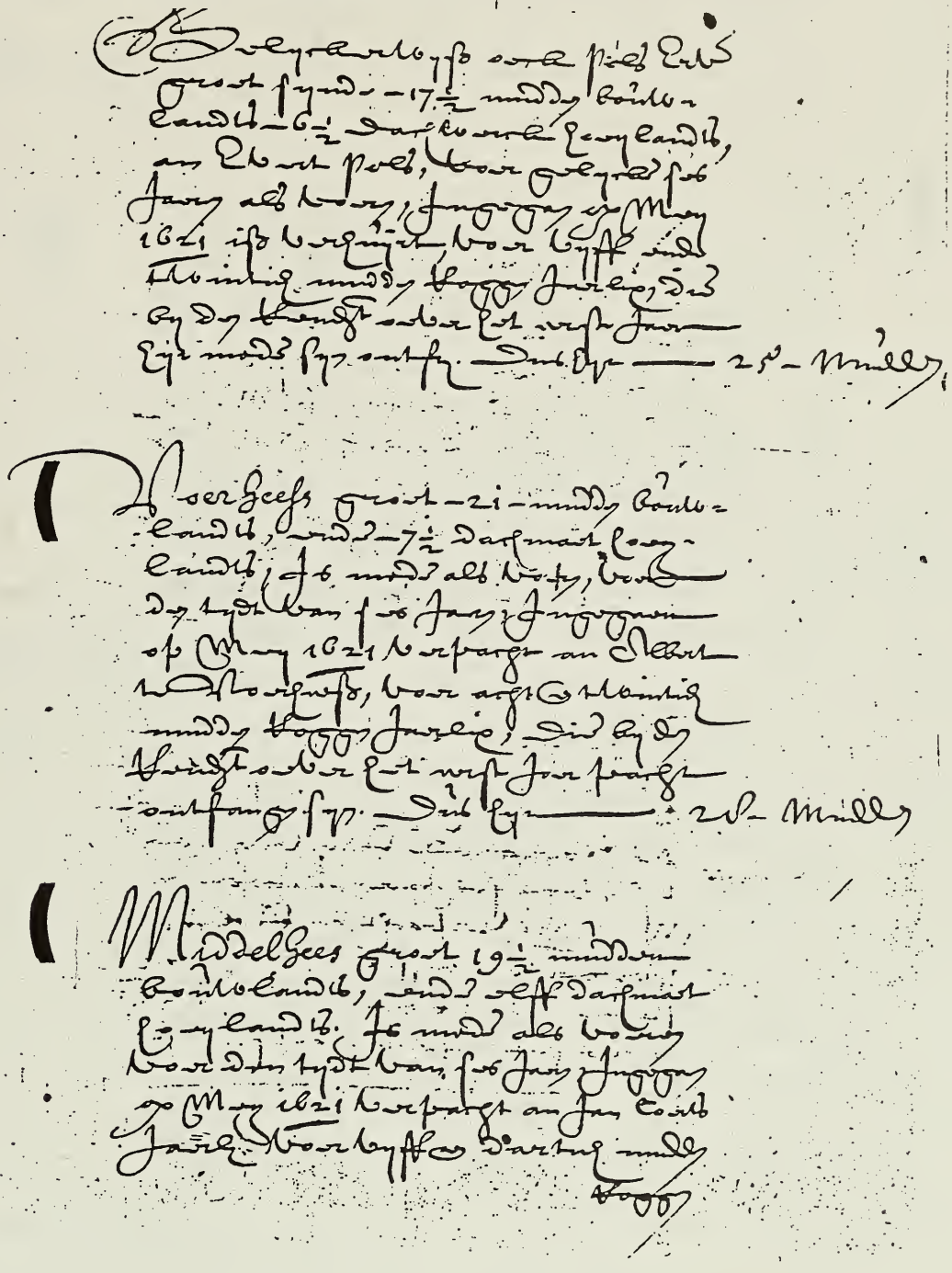
Page of the "Ordelboek" (court record) of the Etstoel of Drenthe in 1542: "Between Coerdt to Hees on one side and Henrick Luekens on the other side, is sentenced that both parties shall enter into a contract on a sold field."

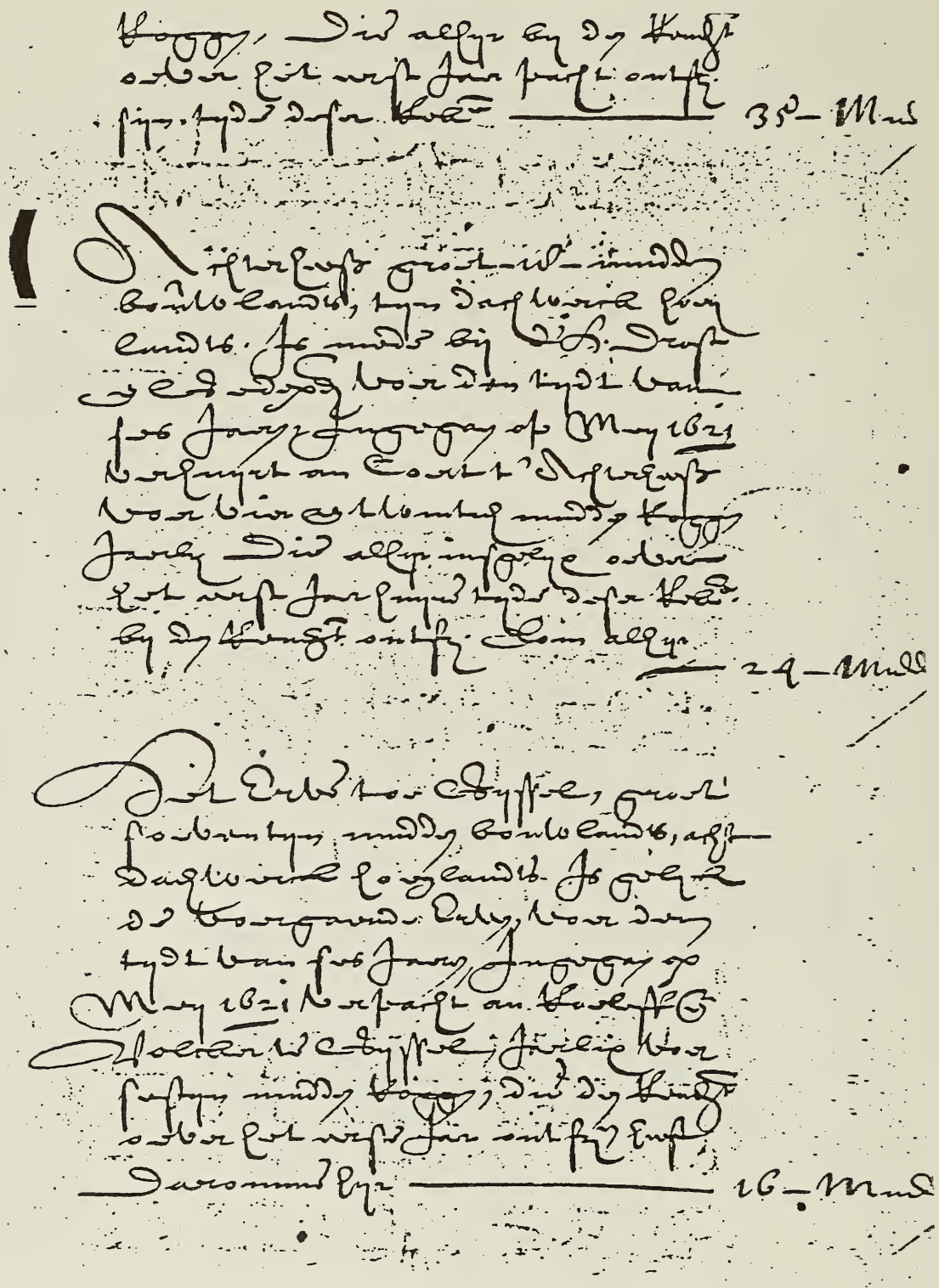


Land-tax record of Ruinen, 1642.

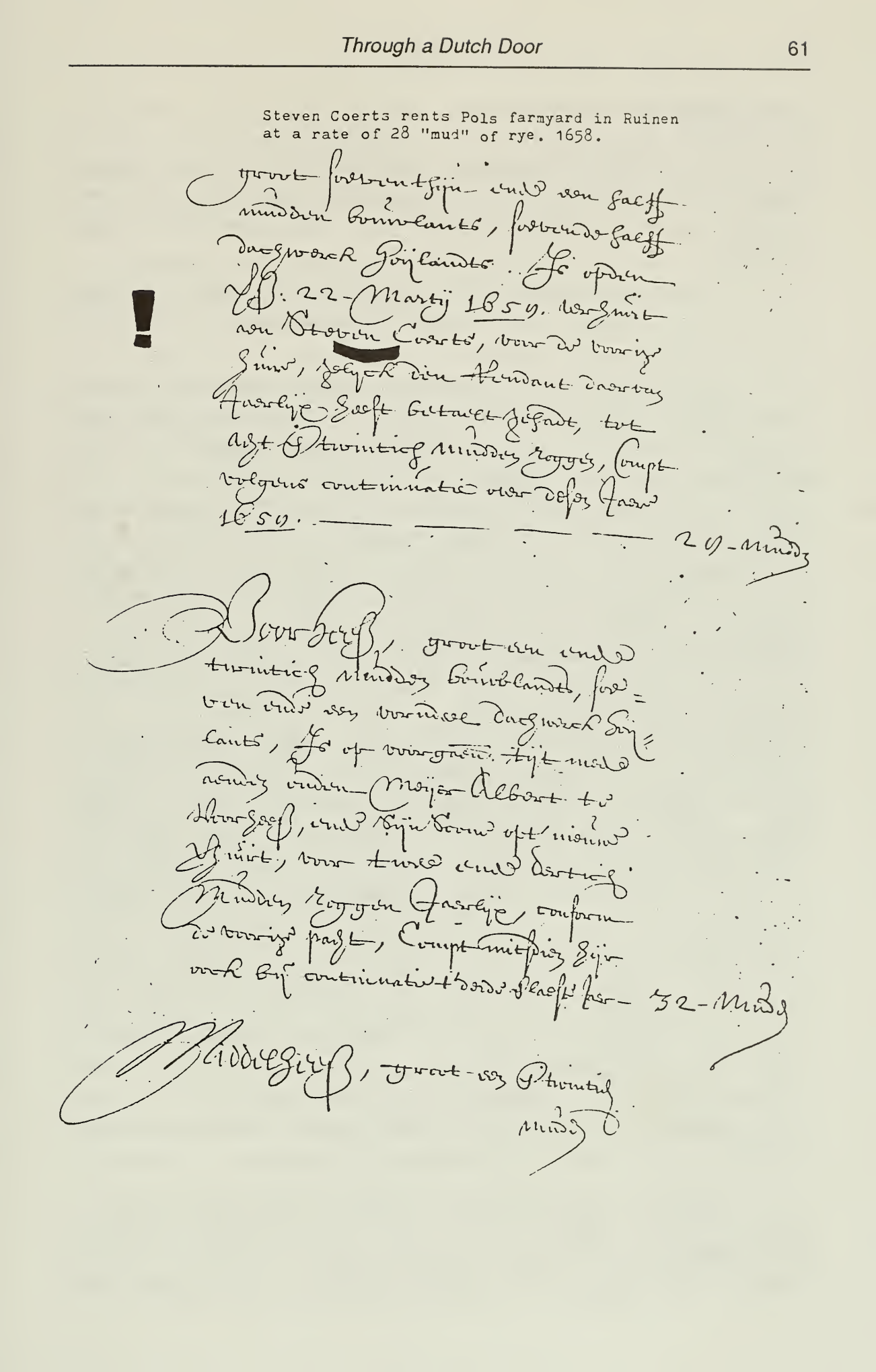
"Steven Coerts 3 "mud" and 2 "schepel"
(about 1 hectare) 539 - 0 - 0
house and garden 300 - 0 - 0
839 - 0 - 0"

Accountbook of Dikninge steward, concerning Voorhees, Middelhees and Achterhees. 1621.





Steven Coerts rents Pols farmyard in Ruinen
at a rate of 28 "mud" of rye. 1658.



APPENDIX A1

Extracts from the register with annotations of some preachers of Ruinen, 1509–1579. (Archief van Dikninge, inv.no. 231). Note: Most items consist of a text in Latin followed by a text in Dutch; the latter is put in brackets.

Fol. 13r: 'Anno eodem (quintodecimo = 1515) et die obiit Roloff Gherts in Hees (1 jaer verdinget voer vyf punt—hornekesgulden (. . .) sint 2 punt ende (. . .)'

'In the same year (1515) and on the same day Rolof Gherts died at Hees (one year fixed (. . .) on five pounds and 1/2 'hornekesgulden', are 2 pounds and (. . .))'. fol. 16d: 'Anno eodem (decimo octavo = 1518) feria sexta post festum Sc. Margarete obiit Jacob te Hees dedit et (. . .) 10 'stuivers' In the same year (1518) on the Friday after the feast of St. Margaret (= July 16) Jacob te Hees died; he gave and (. . .) 10 'stuivers'. fol. 17r: 'Anno eodem (vicesimo = 1520) quinta feria post Urbani et Penthecosten obiit Hille te Hees uxor Jacobi (voerdinget 1 jaer voer 2 philippus gulden mit naedaet ende noemesghelt voer vif (. . .) 1 jaer facit 2 'philippusgulden')' In the same year (1520) on the thursday after Urbanus' day and after Whitsuntide (= May 31) Hille te Hees wife of Jacob died (fixed one year on 2 phillipusgulden with (. . .) and name-money for five (. . .) one year makes 2 philippusgulden)'. fol. 20d: 'Anno eodem (vicesimo secundo = 1522) altera die Lebuini obiit Aleyt van Hees (verdinget voer 6 punt te betaelen Vastelavent toecomende die dre slueter facit 6 punt die twe punt hebbe ick den convent ghegheven an dat huus)' In the same year (1522) on the day after Lebuinus' day (=November 13) Aleyt van Hees died (fixed on 6 pounds to be paid on Shrove Tuesday, due to the porter, makes 6 pounds; the two pounds I have given to the convent at the house)'. fol. 22r: 'Anno eodem (vicesimo tertio = 1523) ipso die Lucie obiit Ghese toe Hees uxor Wilhelm (1 jaer verdinget voer 1-1/2 'philippusgulden' toe betaelen may naestcomende facit. . .)' In the same year (1523) on Lucia's day (= December 13) Ghese toe Hees wife of Wilhelm died (one year fixed on 1-1/2 'philippusgulden' to be paid in May next, makes. . .)'. fol. 54d: 'Anno eodem (quinto decimo = 1515) et die obiit Roloff Geers tho Hees' In margine:"Lamme Roessynck toHees et fuit marita eus'. 'In the same year (1515) and on the same day Roloff Geers tho Hees died.

In margine: 'Lamme Roessynck to Hees and (she) was his wife'. fol. 56r: 'Anno eodem (decimo octavo = 1518) feria sexta post festum Margarete obiit Jacob toe Hees' in margine: 'Johan Jacobs oft Johan ten Toerne'. 'In the same year (1518) Friday after the feast of Margaret (= July

16) Jacob toe Hees died' in margin: 'Johan Jacobs or Johan ten Toerne'. fol. 56d: 'Anno eodem (vicesimo = 1520) quinta feria post Urbani et post Penthecostes obiit Hille toe hees uxor Jacobi' in margine:'Johan Jacobs oft Jan ten Toerne'. In the same year (1520) on the Thursday after Urbanus' day and after Whitsuntide (= May 31) Hille toe Hees wife of Jacob died.

in margine: 'Johan Jacobs or Jan ten Toerne'. fol. 58r: "Anno eodem (vicesimo secundo) altera die Lebuini obiit Aleit van Hees' In the same year (1522) on the day after Lebuinus' day (=

November 13) Aleit van Hees died. fol. 58d: 'Anno eodem (vicesimo tertio = 1523) ipso die Leonardi obiit Esse uyt Hees' In the same year (1523) on Leonardus' day (= November 6) Esse uyt Hees died. fol. 58d: 'Anno eodem (vicesimo tertio = 1523) ipso die Lucie obiit Gese tho Hes' in margine: 'Johan Wylls to Hees mytten kynders' In the same year (1523) on Lucia's day (= December 13) Gese tho Hes died'. in margin: 'Johan Wylls to Hees with the children'. fol. 61r: 'Anno eodem et supra (tricesimo = 1530) quarta feria post Decollationis Johannes Baptiste a 29. die augusti obiit Jutta filia Wilhelmi to Hees in peste et erat famula Ottonis Volkeri

In the same year (1530) Wednesday after (the day of the) decapitation of John the Baptist on 29 August Jutta, daughter of Wilhelm to Hees died of pestilence, and (she) was a servant of Otto Volkers'.

fol. 62d: 'Item anno tricesimo tertio et prenotato (. . .) et festo Philiphi et Jacobi apostoli obiit et sepultus est Johan Wyllens te Hees (inde dat eerste jaer verdinget myt seven schepell roggen) et hornensem presta mento Also in the year (fifteen) thirty-three and mentioned before (. . .) and on thefeast of the apostles Philiphus and Jacobus (= May 1) Johan Wyllens te Hees died and was buried (fixed in the first year with seven 'schepel' of rye) and of this year received as intended'.

fol. 64d: 'Anno eodem et supra (tricesimo septimo = 1537) ipso die Severini vicesimo tertio die mensis octobris obiit Gese uxor Conradi to Hees. In the same year as above (= 1537) on Severinus' day the twenty-third of the month of October Gese, wife of Conradus to Hees died'.

fol. 64d: 'Anno eodem (tricesimo septimo = 1537) ipso die Otmari confessoris et decimo septimo die mensis novembris obiit et sepulta est Rodolpha filia Conradi to Hees facit Coenradus pro uxore et filia de primo anno duosaureos. . .

In the same year (1537) on the day of Otmarus the confessor and the seventeenth day of the month of November Rodolpha daughter of Conradus to Hees died and was buried (which) makes (for) Coenradus for his wife and daughter over thefirst year two golden . . .'

fol. 64d: 'Anno eodem (tricesimo octavo = 1538) obiit Willem to Hees qui erat in anno sui nativitatis centesimo sexto ipso die Mathie apostoli et vicesimo quarto die mensis februarii dedit de primo anno (31 stuivers Brabants)

In the same year (= 1538) Willem to Hees died who was in the one hundred and sixth year of his birth on the day of Matthias the apostle and on the twenty fourth day of the month of February (he?) gave (31 'stuivers' Brabantine) the first year'.

fol. 67r: 'Anno eodem (quadragesimo secundo = 1542) in die Calixti et decimo quarto die mensis octobris obiit et sepulta est Hilla uxor Johannis to Hees dedit de primo anno florenum aureum solvitque (dye praven) de primo die In the same year (= 1542) on Calixtus' day and on the fourteenth day of the month of October Hilla wife of Johannes to Hees died and was buried (she?) gave over the first year (a) golden florin and paid (the benefice) over the first year'.

fol. 68r: 'Anno eodem (quadragesimo quarto = 1544) septimo die mensis junii et feria quarta Penthecostis sepultus est Coenradus to Hees heredes solvertur de primo anno

In the same year (1544) on the seventh day of the month of June and the Wednesday after Whitsuntide (= June 5!) Coenradus to Hees, heir, was buried (. . .) was paid over the first year'.

fol. 73r: 'Anno (15)56 mater Johanni to Hees/uxor Dulmanni In the year (15)56 the mother of Johannes to Hees/wife of Dulman'.

fol. 73d: (1558) Albert te Hees.

fol. 88d: (1557) Berber to Hees.

APPENDIX A2

Extracts of a register of the deceased in Ruinen, Echten, Pesse and Ansen, 1580–1582. (Archief van Dikninge, inv.no. 232).

1581: April 6—Albert to Hees; April 30—Barber tho Hees; August 21—Jan Achterhees; October 1—Roloff to Hees

APPENDIX B

The Seuberinge family

As contrasted with the name Voorhees, the name Seuberinge was well in use as a kind of family name for a longer time before the mid-seventeenth century, though with the drawback that it was a rather common name in the

province of Drenthe in that period. For the name was derived from "ten zuiden van de brink" or "south of the village green", thus theoretically it could be found in every village. Fortunately, in a large number of sources the name of the village is added to the name. This makes the identification of the different Seuberinge families a lot easier.

Most interesting for us at this stage of the research are the Seuberinges from Zwiggelte, a little hamlet near the village of Beilen. In Zwiggelte there were at least two farms which were called Seuberinge-farm, and the inhabitant of both farms added that name to their patronymicum. Although this is not completely sure yet, we may assume that there existed more or less strong family ties between them. Three members of the family are known to us already: Lambertje Roelofs Seuberinge, married to Jan Stryck-er; Willemtje Roelofs Seuberinge, married to Steven Coerts Van Voorhees, and Jan Roelofs Seuberine, married to Adrianna Polhemius. Taken into consideration the fact that they used the same patronymicum, we may assume that they were sisters and brother. Lambertje surely emigrated to New Netherland together with her husband, probably in February 1652 (see above). Willemtje went to America in April 1660, with her husband and children (except her daughter Marchien) (36). About the time that Jan left the Netherlands there is more doubt; he probably went at the same time as his sister Lambertje, about 1652. In any case, he is mentioned in two notarial deeds of February 1660, made in Amsterdam, acting by proxy of the reverend of Midwout, Johannes Theodorus Polhemius[223]. In these he is mentioned as "living in New Netherland, for the time being back in Amsterdam". Thus he must have left at least a number of years before 1660.

There are no further findings about the three above mentioned Seuberinges in the Dutch sources. This is not surprising. Data concerning women are scarce anyhow, and Jan Roelofs was still very young at the time he left (he was born in 1631).

But we can tell something more about their ancestors and their parental farms. As appears from the patronymicum they used, their father's name was Roeloff. From American sources we know that he used the patronymicum Lucassen. (Dutch sources have not yet confirmed this). Roelof (Lucassen) Seuberinge is mentioned several times in the tax registers of Zwiggelte between 1630 and 1654. From the register of the land tax of Zwiggelte of 1642 we learn the size of his property:

"Roelof Soeberinge,

23 mud [224]	comes to 2070
1-1/2 dagwerk [225] of meadowland,	comes to 375

- "waardeel"[226]	comes to 1200
house and garden	comes to 700" [227].

The parental farm of Jan, Lambertje and Willemtje was a farm of respectable size, a so-called "full farm" or "full plough".[228] Their supposed grandfather, Lucas Seuberinge, is mentioned several times between 1584 and 1600 in the "Goorspraken",[229] each time in minor cases. He probably died before 1612, because a tax register from that year does not mention his name. Instead, this register gives the names of three other Seuberinges living in Zwiggelte, namely Albert, Remmelt and Jan.[230] About Albert we do not have further data. Remmelt is mentioned in the "Ordelen" as a "husbandman" of Zwiggelte in 1602[231]. Jan (Johan) is mentioned in 1615 in a sentence of the Drost en Deputies of Drenthe,[232] and in 1630 in the tax registers of Zwiggelte, together with Roelof.[233] Apparently at that time Jan and Roelof were the (main) inhabitants of the two Seuberinge farms at Zwiggelte. After 1630 in the tax registers the name of Jan was replaced by that of Lambert, presumably his son. The tax register of 1642 also gives the size of the second Seuberinge farm at Zwiggelte:

"Lambert Soeberinge,

13 "mud", 2 "schat", 2 "spint" [234]	comes to 1226
1 "dagwerk" of meadowland	comes to 250
3/8 "waardeel"	comes to 900
house and garden [235]	comes to 400"

Thus, the second Seuberinge farm was considerably smaller than the farm used by Roelof Lucassen.

Four other Seuberinges need mentioning: Firstly, Lambert Sobinge, mentioned in the "Goorspraken" in 1554.[236] If we take into consideration his first name, he could have been the father of Jan Seuberinge and the grandfather of the above mentioned Lambert. Secondly, in 1573 the "goorspraken" mention an Egbert Soeberinge.[237] In 1588 the same source refers to him as "the late Egbert Soeberinge" ,[238] so he was dead by then. Thirdly, in 1548 the "Ordelen" mentions a Wyllem Soeberinge.[239] Finally, in 1612 the "Ordelen" mentions an Alyt Soeberinge[240]; at that time she was married for the second time, to a certain Remmelt Buytinge.

The family ties between all these Seuberinges are still very unclear, and here too further research is necessary.

APPENDIX C1

Lucas Bos certifies to have sold to Jan Kiers a house cum annexis at Steenwijk, 1687. (Archief van het gericht Steenwijk, inv.no. 84+)

March 4, 1687

Burgomasters N. Boelens (and) F. Ram

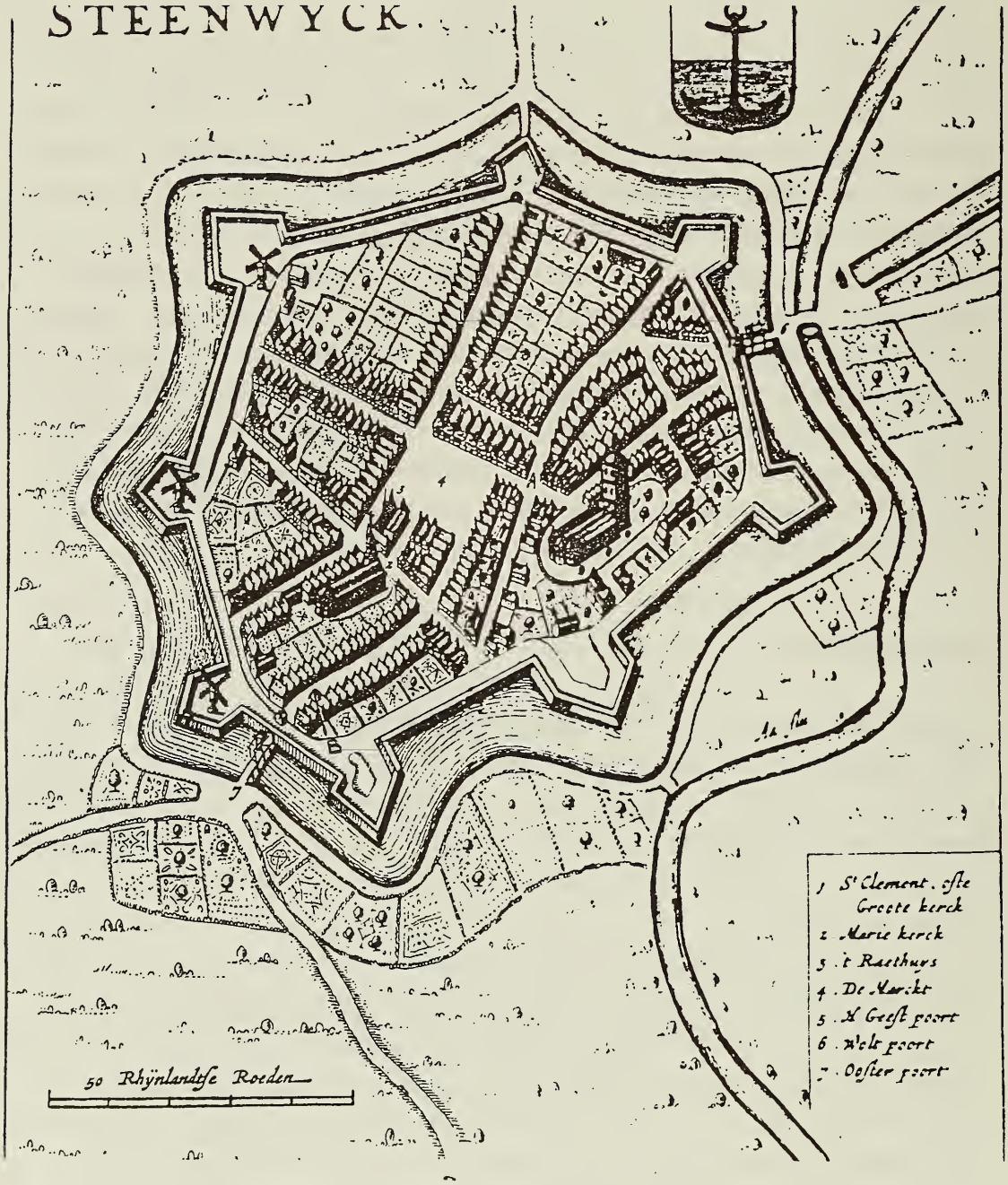
Lucas Bos has acknowledged judicially to have sold in a binding hereditary sale to Jan Kiers nowadays in New Netherland (a) certain house, yard and spot situated at the north side of the 'Oosterstraat' extending from the street to the rampart where at the east side Jan Lubberts Kisteman and at the west side the widow of Harmen Hansen are adjacent, having a full share in the common (land) with a free passage at the side, and is burdened yearly with twenty-four 'stuivers' 'capittelspacht' and twenty five 'stuivers' 'memorienpacht' (and) further free of outgoing rents (and) exempt from manorial tax and neighbour rates, everything further with its right and as of old, and thus (the) seller acknowledged that he had received the full purchase money, so he did cede, convey and transfer the above mentioned house, yard and spot to Henrick Bouwscholte of Ruinen being proxy of Jan Kiers, to have it his own way with it within the limits of proprietary right.

APPENDIX C2

Hendrick Bouwcholte of Ruinen, acting for Jan Kiers, certifies to have sold to Gerrit Jansen Stoelties and now his successor Hendrick Egberts and his wife Jantien Piercks a house cum annexis at Steenwijk, 1687. (Archief van het gericht Steenwijk, inv.no. 84+).

March 4, 1687

Burgomasters N. Boelens (and) F. Ram Hendrick Bouwscholte of Ruinen, as proxy of Jan Kiers nowadays in New Netherland, has acknowledged judicially to have sold to Gerrit Jansen Stoelties and now his successor Hendrick Egberts and his wife Jantien Piercks (a) certain house and yard situated at the north side of the 'Oosterstraat', having at the east side Jan Lubberts Kisteman and at the west side the housing of Lucas Hoemaker, having a full share in the common (land) with a free passage at the side, and is burdened yearly with twenty four 'stuivers' 'capittelspacht' and with twenty five 'stuivers' 'memorienpacht' and further free of outgoing rents (and) exempt from manorial and neighbour



Map 11. Map of Steenwyck

taxes, with right and title as of old, and thus (the) above mentioned seller in his capacity acknowledged to have received the full purchase money, so did he do, in his above mentioned capacity, to the above mentioned buyers, cede, convey and transfer the above mentioned house and yard and spot, to have it their own way with it within the limits of proprietary right.

APPENDIX D

Notarial act made up at the request of Jan Kiers(en) concerning the condition of Jan Roeloffsz van Helten (Eltingh).

Today, on 5 September anno 1678 appeared before me Adriaen van Santen public notary [etc.], in the presence of the witnesses described below, the respectable Paulus Cornelisz van Baeuebrugh, 52 years old, and Jan Teunisz van Dyckhuysen, born in the same city, 28 years old, and have testified and declared at the request of the respectable Jan Kiersen from the "landschap" Drent that it is true that they, witnesses, have lived in New Netherland in America next to the petitioner for many years; namely he, the witness Paulus Cornelisz in the village the Esopos and he the witness Jan Teunisz van Dyckhuysen with the petitioner[241] in the village called Amersfoort; that they, witnesses, also have known for many years Jan Roeloffsz Hel[. . .], also living in the above mentioned village Esopes, being (so they heard from he himself), a son of Roelof Eltingh born at Swichteloo[242] in the above mentioned "landschap" Drenthe; further that they have departed and sailed, together with the petitioner on the thirteenth of May of this year (reckoned in the) old style, from Land's End out of the bay of New York on the ship called the Broe[. . .]; [that they, . . .] their departure, have left behind the above mentioned Jan Roelof[fsz van] Helten, being healthy and in good condition, together with his wife and two children, pretending [. . .] that they have spoken to the same shortly before and have said goodbye to the same. Presenting [. . .?. . .]. Everything done sincerely [. . .?. . .] in the presence of [. . .?. . .]. In margin: and the [witness] Paulus Cornelis [. . .] that he has [. . .] shortly before the [. . .] the wife and two children of the [. . .] Jan Roeloffs. Source: Notarial archives of Amsterdam, protocol no. 3787, p. 145.

APPENDIX E

Sentence of the 'Etstoel' in the lawsuit of Hilbert Coerts and his son Wessel Hilberts against Jan Bouschulten.

14 July Saturday the twenty fifth of July a.m.

In the lawsuit of Hilbert Coerts and his son Wessel Hilberts in the 'Reechien' plaintiffs on the one side and Jan Bouschulten defendant on the other side, the plaintiffs having given notice of appeal of a sentence of the court-day of the first of March 1721, by which the appellants were sentenced [to pay] the duty and fine imposed on the following offense, [namely] that in the months November and December 1720 they would have slaughtered two swine and a fat animal, and [that] they would have handed over a half swine of it to their nephew Coert Wessels at Suitwolde: objecting to this, [they said] that they had slaughtered no more than one animal and one and a half swine: being of opinion not to be obliged to any fine, because they had not practiced fraud, but on the contrary they had stated the animal and pigs, and they had come to terms with the defendant, that at all events the defendant would have no further right to the plaintiffs as to perfect the entered contract, and that further Wessel Hilberts volunteered to declare under oath, that they had come to terms in private without any conditions of Lady Haersolte, asking for an alteration of this [sentence]; against which on behalf of the defendant was asked for confirmation of the given sentence, and that [there] would not be any reason for the appellants to object to the sentence, being of opinion to have proven sufficiently by means of the act of the 'schulte' of Ruinerwold, that [they] had slaughtered two swine and an animal and that the handing over of a half swine to Coert Wessels could not free them, according to art. 3 of the decree on the slaughter rent, and also that the appellants were rightly condemned to pay the fine, and that the 'animus fraudendi' would have appeared from the result; saying that he had come to terms with the appellants about the slaughter rent in no other way as under the condition, that [they] would not continue to seize Lady Haersolte, and that he would not have come to terms without that condition: in a reply the appellants considered as profitable for themselves to have it noted down that the defendant had to confess that was given notification to him about the slaughter, and thus that [they] did not have the intention to practice fraud, and that they would have come to terms without any supervision of Lady Haersolte too, which they put [. .?. .] of the defendant. The defendant anew [. .?. .] his former arguments, pointing out to the lords assessor and twenty four 'Etten', that the defendant will declare under

oath pending the 'lottinck'[243] to the secretary of the 'landschap', Q. Beeltsnijder, that the appellants have come to terms about the slaughter rent in no other way as under the condition that they would not continue to seize Lady Haersolte, by which oath, being sworn by the defendant, the sentence is confirmed [. .?. .]. On the twenty fifth of July 1722 Jan Bouschulten has sworn this imposed oath, after a foregoing warning for the punishment on perjury, in the presence of Wessel Hilberts.

Signed: Q. Beeltsnijder.

Source: Archieven van de Etstoel, inv no.14.

APPENDIX F

[Fragment of the] guardian account of Hilbert Courts, being main guardian of the minor children of Jan Dulman procreated by Zieghyn Hilberts.

Anno 1713 the fourteenth of December the honourable Hilbert Courts, being main guardian of the minor children of the late Jan Dulman procreated in wedlock by the late Zyeghyn Hilberts, [and] in the presence of the honourable Berent Dulman and Albert Hilberts (the other co guardian the honourable Jan Hogenkamp stayed absent, though denounced to be present by the court of Meppel on behalf of this main guardian according to a deed shown to me on 12 December 1713), has drawn up his guardian account before me 'schulte', of which receipt. . . . . .155-19-0 the expenditure the total amount of. . . . . .341- 9-7 and thus the greater amount of the expenditure comes to the total amount of. . . . . .185- 9-15 Signed: the attestor, H.J. Camerlingh, 'schulte', 1713.

For the further accounts concerning this guardianship, drawn up before this date, one has to look in the old protocol, in which however cannot be found an inventory of these pupil's goods, made up and handed over by entering this guardianship; and because the new law of the land says that all guardian accounts should be recorded, so the main guardian, when I told him this, has handed over to me, 'schulte', not only an inventory which he had at hand and which was alleged to have been made up at the start of his guardianship and the above mentioned guardian account, but also the guardian accounts of the second of July 1711 and the eighteenth of June 1712, with the request that I should record them all in order and rank, and in what manner these follow below.

This is the list of the movables of the chidren of the late Jan Dulman:

firstly silverware at both sides,

secondly one little book with silver mounting,
thirdly two silver spoons,
fourthly two old rixdollars,
fifthly one silver casque,
sixthly one silver thimble,
seventhly one silver hair-pin,
eighthly two golden rings, the one is a plain ring, the other a ring with stones,
ninthly one silver hair pin.

2

firstly one black skirt and
secondly a pair of trousers,
thirdly one coloured pair of trousers.

3

firstly one good black skirt,
secondly two coloured camlet skirts,
thirdly one red scarlet skirt.

These are the debentures:

firstly the young lady of Ansen one debenture of	500-0-0
secondly Jan Hogenkamp one debenture of	300-0-0
thirdly Hilbert Coerts debenture	100-0-0
fourthly uncle Jan Alberts debenture	200-0-0
the widow of Claas Kyns owing the chidren of the late Jan Dulman	60-0-0
the young ladies one years rent to	29-0-0
[owed] from the organist of Dwingelo	8-0-0

These are the immovables: firstly a house at Ruynen, secondly one 'mud'of arable land, thirdly one 'deimt' at the 'Weyde', fourthly one 'deimt' in the 'Oostermaath', fifthly one 'deimt' in the 'Fleddertijs', sixthly a peace of meadowland at Eemster in the 'Dijkte' as great and small as it is.

APPENDIX G

Fragment of the lawsuit against Jan Coerts van Voorhees Your honours, my lords 'Drost and Deputies', States of the 'landschap' Drenthe etc. etc. The 'rentmeester' Focco Lunsingh raises objections by your honours in all humility, that [the] objector has been informed that the farmer on the farmyard of the'landschap' called Voorhees, who will leave the farmyard next May, has transported from the above mentioned farmyard, al-

ready before his departure, a number of wagon-loads of dung, and has brought the above mentioned dung to his own land, withdrawing it from the farmyards of the 'landschap' and benefiting himself with it; and because the above mentioned action is in defiance of the resolutions of this 'landschap' and also against all reasonableness, 'quae non patitur aliquem locupletari cum alterius iniuria vel iactura', but objector has the order to request your honours concerning this, and that your honours will order him how objector will have to handle in this case.

In margin:—If the departed farmer will not make good voluntarily the damage done to the 'landschap' and to the new farmer, the barrister Struuk will be authorised to force him to it by law. Actum Assen the twenty-eighth of April 1708. Signed: J. Nijsingh, 1708.

- I, the undersigned secretary of the 'landschap' certify that the barrister Philibert Struuck has constituted before me, because of the above mentioned authorization, the barrister L. Beeldsnijder [. .?. .] what is mentioned now in the above mentioned authorization. Actum in De Wijk, the eighteenth of June 1708. Signed: [. .?. .] Kiers.

APPENDIX H.1

Deed of conveyance of Voorhees, 1815, with appendices.

Front page: treaty of a right of 'beklemming'. Appeared before the undersigned Mr. Johan Kymmell, public notary residing in Meppel, canton Meppel in the 'landschap' Drenthe , and in the presence of the below mentioned and co-undersigned witnesses, Harm Duizenkunst farmer living at Voorhees within the municipality of Ruinen and Albert de Vriese likewise farmer and living at Oldehove within the above mentioned municipality; declaring the first mentioned appearer Harm Duizenkunst to have sold to the last mentioned appearer Albert de Vriese, who likewise acknowledges herewith to have accepted the purchase, the permanent and eternal lasting 'beklemming' of a farmyard called 'Voorhees-erve' consisting

1) of a house and garden as well as twenty-two 'mudden' of arable land, standing and being situated within the municipality of Ruinen bordering to the north upon the public road, to the east and west upon Jan Santing and Albert Willems and to the south upon the common,

2) of three 'deimten' of meadowland being situated as before, called the 'Langemaade', bordering to the west upon Albert Willems, to the east upon Wessel Noordhuis, to the south upon Jan Kolk and Hendrik Koes and to the north upon the widow of Jan Brouwer,

3) of four and a quarter 'deimten' of the same land called the 'Speek' being situated as before bordering to the east, the west and the south upon Albert Willems and to the north upon Reinder Roelofs and associates. And these altogether for a total amount of one thousand and five hundred 'guldens', to be paid in three equal terms, namely the first [term] on the first of May 1815 at the acceptance of the purchased goods which then will take place, the second [term] on the first of May 1816 and the third or last term on the first of May 1817. The 'beklemming' of the above mentioned farmyard has been sold and bought so and in that manner as the seller is entitled to [do] as a 'beklemde' farmer; meaning especially that the buyer or the next 'beklemde' farmer will have to behave himself according to the conditions under which the farmyards of the 'landschap' have been sold in 'beklemming' in the year 1751, of which conditions a collated copy, properly registrated at Meppel on the thirtieth of December last,has been added to this (see Appendix H.3).[244] Further the buyer or the next 'beklemde' farmer is obliged to pay yearly a rent of one hundred and forty 'guldens' to the Lord Reint Hendrik de Vos van Steenwijk, living on the Havixhorst, who has bought from the 'landschap' the property of the above mentioned farmyard called Voorhees, appearing from a deed of conveyance from the seventeenth of July 1807, executed at that time before the 'schulte' of Ruinen and witnesses, written properly on stamped paper of which likewise a collated copy is added to this minute (see Appendix H.2),[245] [and] which has been registered properly at Meppel on the thirtieth of December last. Notwithstanding that the buyer can accept the purchase on the first of May 1815, the same however will stay burdened in behalf of the sellers until the moment that the purchase money will be paid in full, which will have to be proved by means of a receipt, after which he, seller, herewith puts the buyer in the full possession and property of the purchased, to act with it as an owner is permitted to do with his [own]; he, the seller, promising to safeguard the buyer at all times and in all cases, so to safeguard [him] 'cas evictie' as otherwise according to the law. Done and executed at Meppel in the office of the above mentioned notary on the twenty sixth of January 1815, in the presence of Lambert Benthem baker, and Gerrit Jan Hagedoorn, shoemaker, both living in Meppel, explicitly requested as witnesses in this matter, who after proper reading of this present minute, which has stayed in keeping and possession of the undersigned notary, have signed it together with the appearers and the notary.

Signed: Harm Duisenkunst Albert de Vriese L. Benthem G.J. Hagedoorn J. Kymmell, notary.

In margin (p. 1):—Court at Meppel, the third of February 1815 fol. 108 [. .?. .] seventy-five 'guldens' seventeen 'stuivers' with increase.

—[. .?. .] st. 126 -40
10e st. 12 -64
16e st. 20 -23
159 -27

APPENDIX H.2

Standing on the front of the first page which follows: "Recorded in the protocol of public and voluntary cases of the 'scholtampt'.[246] (A 'schultambt'is the district of a 'schulte', i.e. a kind of sheriff) Dwingelo, Ruinen, Ansen and Rhebruggen, the nineteenth of July 1807, page 75, 76, 77, signed by me, H.C. Prins, 'scholte'". Exhibitum and handed over to the buyer at Havelte on the twenty sixth of August 1807, signed J. Collard [. .?. .]. [I] Mr. H.C. Prins, 'scholte' of Dwingelo, Ruinen, Ansen and Reebruggen cum annexis, notify and certify herewith, that today has appeared before me 'scholte' and two qualified 'keurnoten'[247] ('Keurnoten' were persons who acted as witnesses) being Hendrik Roelofs Veurman and Jan Jans Kuiper living in the 'marke' [248] A 'marke' is in this context a community of landowners who have rights to the adjacent uncultivated lands) of Ruinen, the [. .?. .] Mr. J. Engelenberg, assessor in the departmental administration of Drenthe, delegated by resolution of the 'landdrost' [249] (A 'landdrost' was a judicial official) of the above mentioned department in dato the fifteenth of June 1807, seen and read here in court, to give conveyance and transfer to Lord Reint Hendrik de Vos van Steenwijk of the ownership bought by him of the farmyards sold in 'beklemming' in the year 1751 after the full payment of the purchase money should have been achieved; declaring the lord appearer that it has been sold publicly by the delegates of the former Financial Council of Drenthe to the Lord Reint Hendrik de Vos van Steenwijk and his heirs the farmyard of the 'landschap' called 'Voorhees-erve', belonging to the 'rentambt' [250] (A 'rentambt' was the district or complex that was administrated by a 'rentmeester', who was an official of the 'landschap') of the convent of Dikninge in the parish of Ruinen, great 22 'mudden' of arable land [and] 7 'deimt' of meadowland, accounting yearly for fl. 140, on the fifth of January 1807 and the further permissions in date the twenty sixth of January 1807. All mentioned in full in the above mentioned conditions with its ??delights and burdens belonging to it so and in that manner as the 'landschap' has been entitled to it and this for a total amount of fl. 3851, to pay in two equal terms, the first in May 1807 and the second in May 1808,

the just half part each time; he, the Lord appearer, considering the fact that today has been achieved the full payment of both terms, the last as well as the first, does herewith convey and transfer according to the law of the land, on behalf of the 'landschap', of the above mentioned farmyard to the lord buyer Reint Hendrik de Vos van Steenwijk and his heirs, ceding and transferring it in virtue of this in hereditary property, promising to watch over and safeguard this sold property at all times and to free it from all scandals and claims and [. .?. .] rightfully according to the law of the land of Drenthe, and which has been taken up and accepted by the Lord seller in equal form. This documented in truth, we, the above mentioned 'scholte' and 'keurnoten' and the lord transporter have signed [this] with our own hands and I, 'scholte', have confirmed [this] ??in behalf of more solidity with my official seal. Actum Ruinen on the seventeenth of July 1807. Signed: H.C. Prins, 'scholte'; Hendrik Roelofs Veurman; Jan Jans Kuiper; J. Engelenberg qq.

This present copy has been collated by Mr. Johan Kymmell, public notary residing at Meppel, canton Meppel in the 'landschap' Drenthe, today the thirtieth of December 1814 according to the minute that has been handed over to the mentioned notary and returned by him in turn, appearing from the fact that this has been signed and sealed by me, notary. Signed: J. Kymmell.

In margin:—Court at Meppel the thirtieth of December 1814
fol. 86 [. .?. .] twelve 'stuivers' with increase. —ppl. g. 1

10e st. 10

16e st. 16

1—26

APPENDIX H.3

[The] conditions under which the farmyards of the 'landschap' have been sold 'bij beklemming' in the year 1751.

1) The farmyards of the 'landschap' will be sold 'bij beklemming' with the wood standing in the gardens and in the enclosed fields.

2) The farmyards will be accepted in May 1751.

3) The payment of the promised purchase money will take place in three terms, being May 1751, 1752 and 1753, a third part each time.

4) The 'beklemde' farmer will be obliged to pay to the 'landschap' a certain rent which will be modified.

5) The 'beklemde' farmer will pay one 'ducaat' to the 'landschap' every sixth year as a present.

6) If the farmer wants to make over his right to another [person] he is allowed to do so, on the understanding that he asks for permission of the 'Ridderschap en Eigenerfden'.

7) And in that case the next farmer as well as the leaving farmer shall pay ten 'caroliguldens' each as a present.

8) When in case of death of man or wife, the longest living remarries, there will be paid ten 'guldens' as a present.

9) When the 'beklemminge' passes to the children through inheritance there will be paid three 'guldens' as a present and twenty 'guldens' to the relatives in the collateral line.

10) In case that the farmer has not paid the promised rent in three successive years, he will be deprived of the right of 'beklemming', and it will return to the advantage of the 'landschap'without any restitution of money.

11) The ownership of the landed property as well as of the farms standing on the common remains with the 'landschap' in every respect.

12) The selling or issuing will take place in Assen 'publicus incollegia' in the presence of the honourable lords 'Drost and Deputies' together with delegates out of the 'Ridderschap' and the 'dingspillen' (A 'dingspil' was a jurisdiction, containing a number of parishes. This name was used only in the province of Drenthe) on the twenty first of September 1748 mentioned already.

13) The mentioned lords and delegates shall draw no fee, but two 'guldens' because of expenses.

14) The farmyards of the 'landschap' at Witten, Haalen and Assen shall not be hired out 'bij beklemming' but to the utmost profit of the 'landschap'.

15) The 'Drost and Deputies' should be authorised first to continue the farmers of the 'landschap' another year until May 1751, and to take care of the necessary proclamations of that in church, as well as in [the] case that some other farmer should want to leave the farm or should want to hire it again for one year.

16) The farms of the 'landschap' shall be sold 'bij beklemming' in such way and manner and as big and little as they are used by the present farmers.

17) In case that the renters or buyers should get some fields at places where there are common forests or common wood and there should occur a division [of land], they will not take action but let the 'rentmeester' handle the case, who will have to render an account of it to the landschap'; and in

case some 'beklemde' farmers will be found doing the contrary, they not only will pay the fine imposed on it according to the law of the land, but [to them] will be given notice to quit.

18) In case that some renters or buyers should take the chance to cut or to let cut some trees or parts of it standing on the common under the pretext of firewood or wood for wagons or wheels, the fine imposed on it according to the law of the land will be taken from them, and furthermore they will be prosecuted in that manner as has been said in the preceding article.

19) The 'landschap' reserves the right to itself to let dig off at will here and there if it suits well some parcels of land or peat-soil from the common, to sow them with oaks or to destine them for parcels of sprouts, without the right of reply for the 'beklemde' farmers.

20) Be it conditioned explicitly that the 'beklemde' farmers are not allowed to charge the costs of suit of done divisions of land, nor the costs of carpenter's work and repairs on houses, barns, etc. at the expense of the 'landschap' and also that the same [farmers] moreover will have to carry all ordinary and extraordinary burdens which otherwise usually are chargeable to the owner, of what nature they might be, [and] the burdens that may rest on the farms or goods or which in the future might be put on them as well as on the used lands, as is proper. This found thus far extracted and in harmony with the original. Actum Dwingeloo the first of April 1807, signed Dr. J. Eggink, pawnee.

The present copy has been collated by Mr. Johan Kymmell public notary, residing at Meppel, canton Meppel in the 'landschap' Drenthe, today the thirtieth of December 1813, according to a copy handed over to the mentioned notary and returned by him in turn. On witness whereof this has been signed and sealed by me, notary.

In margin (p. 1):—Court at Meppel the thirtieth of December 1814 fol. 86 vo. [. .?. .] twelve 'stuivers' with increase.

—ppl. st. 1
10e st.10
16e st.16
st.26

Source: Archief van notaris J. Kymmel te Meppel, 1815 no. 9.

APPENDIX I

Court Jansen van Middelhees certifies to have sold to Hendrick Coenderts and his wife Swaentien Hendricks a house cum annexis at Steenwijk, 1655 (Archief van het gericht Steenwijk, inv.no. 84+).

March 8, 1655

Jan Roelofs Ram and Aron Kiers van de Ramshorst

Court Jansen van Middelhees for himself and also guaranteeing for his wife has acknowledged judicially to have sold of his own free will and with well considered intention, for a sum of money that has been fully paid to him, to the married couple Hendrick Coenderts and Swaentien Hendricks a house, barn, cottage and spot standing and situated at the east side of the 'Markt', at the corner of the 'Kleine Kerkstraat', having Jan Lamberts at the east side and north side adjacent, having a full share in the common (land) and (having) the annex eight feet 'Steendijk' near the 'Oosterbrug' together with Jan Lamberts, free of outgoing rents, except candle- and neighbour taxes; the above mentioned seller in his above mentioned capacity doing transfer, renunciation, delivery and remission of the above mentioned house, barn and spot with the cottage, without keeping any further right to it under security of guarantee for judicial recapture, for use possession and hereditary property of Hendrick Coenderts and his wife, the above mentioned buyers to have it at their full disposal within the limits of hereditary purchase and proprietary right. And Mr. Evert Rolofs ter Mech, being present in the same court has let in and bound himself as bail against all titles and judicial recapture of the above mentioned house and spot cum annexis.

APPENDIX J

Order given by 'Drost and Deputies' of Drenthe to Gerhard Struuck 'rentmeester' of Dikninge to pay to Theodorus Polheym his yearly salary. With affirmation of receipt by the latter, 1628. (Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778, year 1628).

Drost and Deputies of the 'Landtschap' Drenthe order Gerhard Struuck 'rentmeester' of the convent of Dickninge, to pay to Joannes Polheim preacher at Meppel the amount of two hundred 'carolusgulden' in fulfilment of the yearly salary which is assigned to him by 'Ridderschap en Eigenerden' on the 'landdag' of February 19, 1627 out of the means of the convent Dickninge, for the divine service at Meppel. Expiring the last day

of April next. This will be charged to the 'rentmeester' mentioned above by proper receipt. Actum Assen 1628, 17 January.

In margine:—registrata folio 51; - 200 guilders

signed: J. Rutger van den verso Betzelaer

Johan Hiddinge

Johan Buitinge

at command of the h.h. Drost and Deputies, G. Struuck.

I, the undersigned, acknowledge to have received from the 'rentmeester' this amount mentioned above of two hundred 'carolusgulden', the one on 9 August 1627 and the other at this date. Thanking also his h. for good payment. Actum Havelthe 1628 January 24.

signed: Johannes Theodorus Polheym, preacher at Meppel.

APPENDIX K

Lists of tenants of Voorhees, Middelhees, Achterhees and 'Pol's erve'

1. Voorhees

. . . .—1544	Coert?
1556(1544?)—1581	Albert te (Voor)hees
1581?- ca. 1600	Hilbrandt (Hilbert)
ca. 1600–1613	Coert
1614–1648	Albert Coerts te Voorhees (1614-1620: Coert te Voorhees user)
1649–1650	Albert Coerts with his sons
1651–1661	Albert Coerts with his son
1662–1676	Coert Alberts
1677–1708	Jan Coerts (in 1708 Remmelt Hendriks is mentioned as user)
1709–1713	Remmelt Hendrix
1714–1750	Hendrik Remmelts
1751–1768	Hilbert Freriks
1769–1794	Harm Hendriks de Wit
1795–1809	Jan Jans Doem
ca. 1810–1815	Harm Duizenkunst

1815–ca. 1850	Albert de Vrieze
ca. 1850–ca. 1882	Jan Luchies Nijsing
ca. 1882 demolished	

2. Middelhees

. . . .—. . . .	Willem te Hees (1432–1538)?
. . . .—. . . .	Jan Wilms (d. 1533)?
. . . .—. . . .	Willem?
ca. 1556—before 1595	Jan (Johan) Wilms = Jan Middelhees
before 1595–ca. 1600	Coert te Middelhees?
ca. 1600–1607?	Johan (Jan) Coerts te Middelhees
1608?- 1619	Johan Coerts and Willem te Middelhees
1620–1637	Johan Coerts te Middelhees
1638–1649	Hendrick and Geert Jansen
1650–1657	Geert Jansen and his son
1658–1685	Hilbert Geerts
1686–1702	Geert Hilberts
1703–1750	Jacob Michiels
1751–1759	Roelof Jacobs
1760–1764	Jan Hendriks
1765–1799	widow of Jan Hendriks
1800–1824	Albert Willems Westerhuis
1825–?	Albert Jans Joosten

3. Achterhees

before 1556–1581	Jan Achterhees
1582–. . . .	Hendrick?
. . . .–1613	Hilbert (Hilbrandt)
1614–1641	Coert Hilbers te Achterhees (1614–1620 Hilbert as user)
1642–1664	Hilbert Coerts te Achterhees
1665–1666	Hilbert Coerts and Geerlich Hermans
1667–1683	Geerlich Hermans
1684–1708	Luitien Albarts [Smits]
1709–1731	Roelof Alberts
1732–1737	Berent Roelofs
1738–1743	Lambert Jans
1744–1750	Jacob Reints
1751–1768	Jan Scholten van Pesse
1768–1774	minor children of Sent Jans Coeling

1775–1780	Harm Jans Hof
1781–1787	Jan Pauwels Sent
1788–1806	Gerrit Cornelis
1807–?	Swaentien Sents, widow of Gerrit Cornelis
1832	Jan Jans Santinge

4. Pol's erve

1614–1641	Evert Pols
1642–1649	Evert Pols and his son
1650–1654	Johan Everts
1655–1657	'rentmeester' of Dikninge (Steven Coerts sub-tenant ??)
1658–1660	Steven Coerts
1661–1670	Hendrick Frens
1671–1676	widow of Hendrick Frens
1677–1703	Coert Hendrix
1704–1713	Coene Hendriks and Jan Bartols
1714–1719	Coene Hendriks and Roelof Hendriks
1720–1726	Coene Hendriks
1727–1743	Roelof Hendriks
1744–1750	Harmen Alberts and Karst Alberts Swiers
1751–1759	Albert Harms
1760–1768	widow of Albert Harms
1769–1801	Albert Harms Zwiers
1802–?	Jentien Semens (Zimons), widow of Albert Harms Zwiers.

APPENDIX L

Genealogical tables

L1: Explanation to the tables

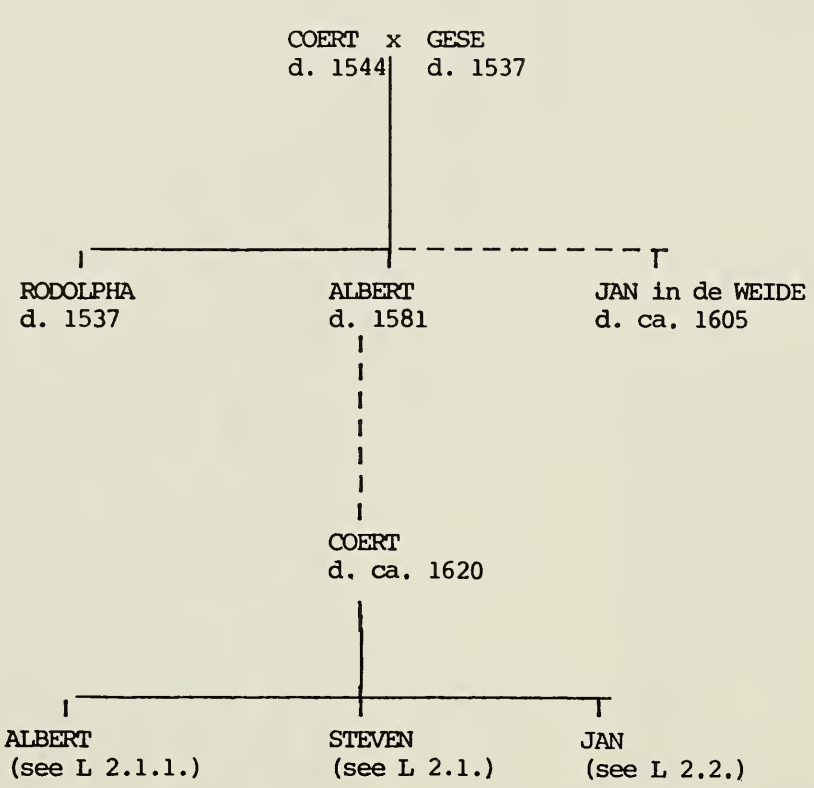
As I have said before in this article, the preparation of a genealogy is a dangerous task, especially where it concerns a period in which we have no regular baptismal, marriage and death registers at our disposal. Unfortunately, this is the case for the greater part of our period. For the period after around 1620 we can solve this problem through other sources. For the period before about 1620 the situation is more complex. The registers of the preachers of Ruinen deliver a lot of names, and in some cases a connection between them is mentioned. But for most of these names it is dif-

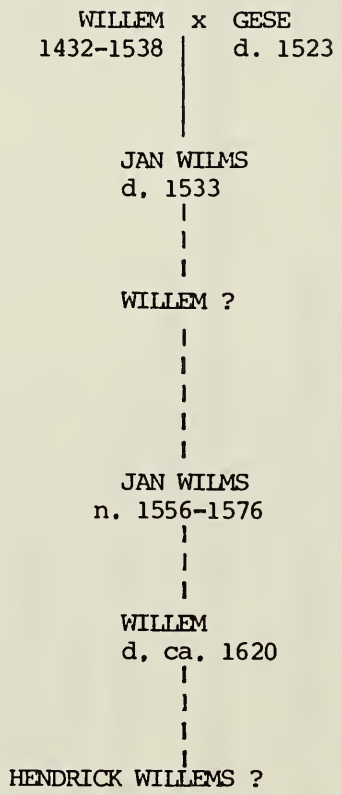
ficult, if not impossible to fit them in the tables. For that reason many names mentioned in the article will be missing in the tables.

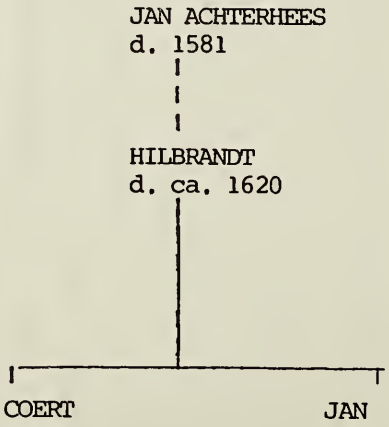
Genealogical tables as I made them up are (in my opinion) all that can be derived from the data available at this moment, without getting into mere speculation. And even in these tables there are uncertainties; these are indicated with dotted lines. Especially the part before around 1620 should be considered a provisional genealogy rather than a definitive one. It is based in part on the supposition of 'lines' of first names: Coert—Albert—Coert etc. at Voorhees and Willem—Jan—Willem etc. at Middelhees. Such an alternation was not uncommon; but it was not law either and thus this part of the genealogy borders on the hypothetical.

L2: Early tenants of Voorhees, Middelhees, Achterhees, and Pol's erve
L2.1, L2.1.1, L2.1.2, L2.1.3 Voorhees Branch
L2.2, L2.2.1 Middelhees Branch
L2.3 Achterhees Branch
L3 The Seuberinge Family

L 2

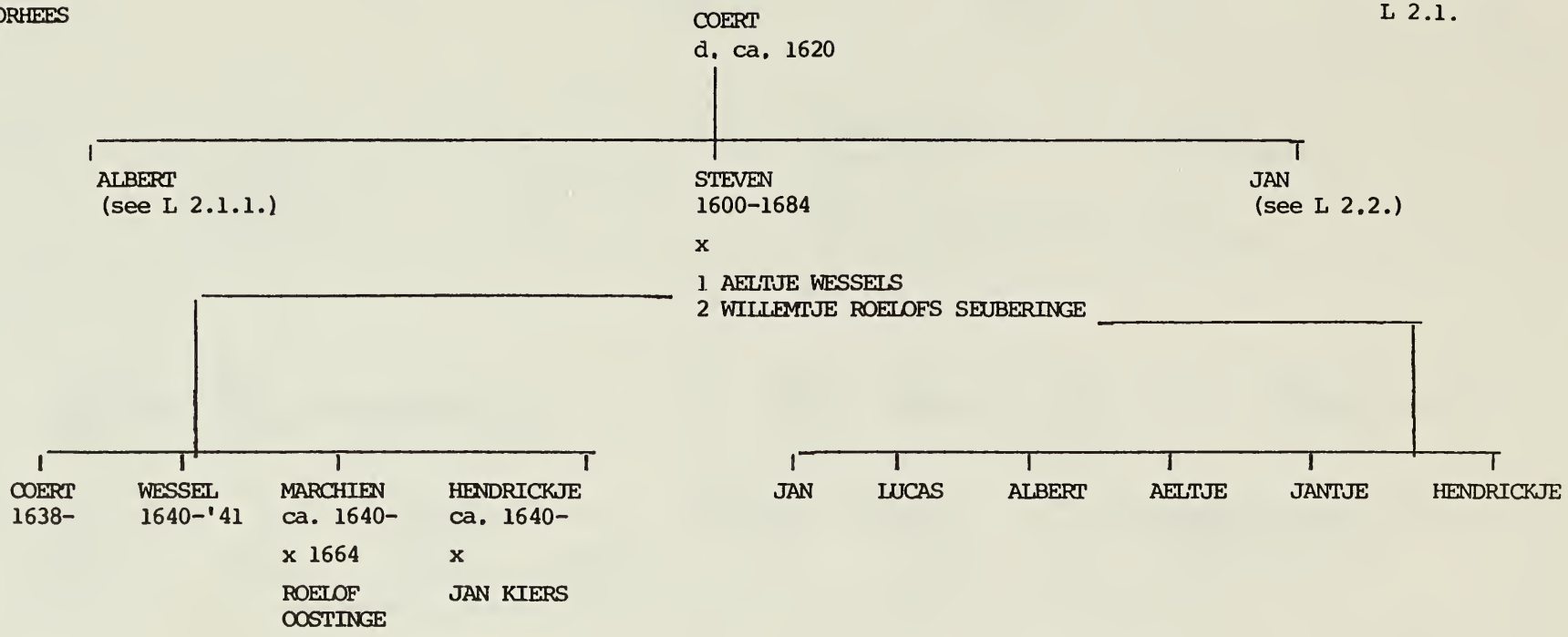

COERT x GESE
d. 1544 d. 1537
RODOLPHA
d. 1537
ALBERT
d. 1581
JAN in de WEIDE
d. ca. 1605
COERT
d. ca. 1620
ALBERT
(see L 2.1.1.)
STEVEN
(see L 2.1.)
JAN
(see L 2.2.)

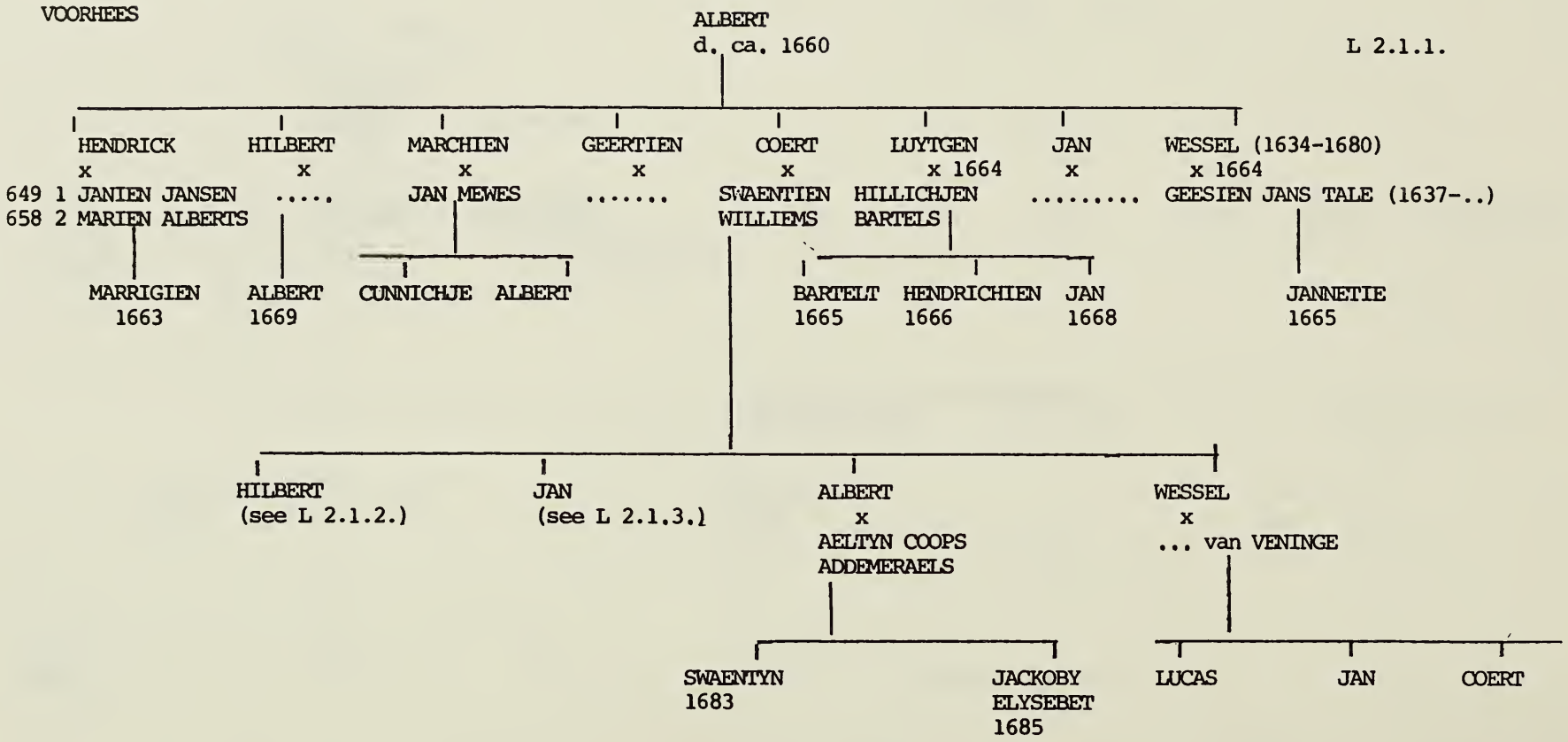

WILLEM x GESE
1432-1538 d. 1523
JAN WILMS
d. 1533
WILLEM ?
JAN WILMS
n. 1556-1576
WILLEM
d. ca. 1620
HENDRICK WILLEMS ?


JAN ACHTERHEES
d. 1581
HILBRANDT
d. ca. 1620
COERT
JAN

VOORHEES

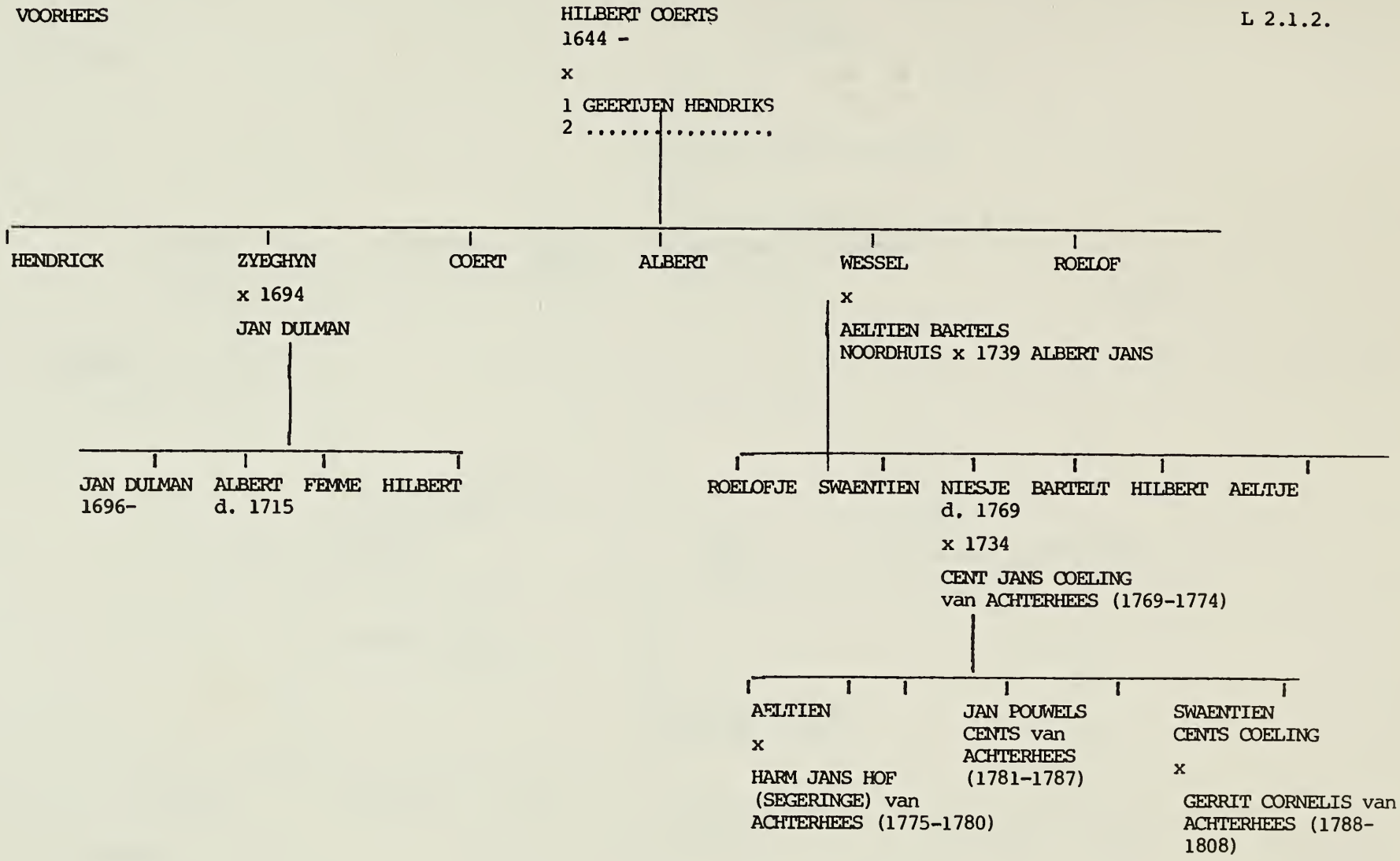
L 2.1.

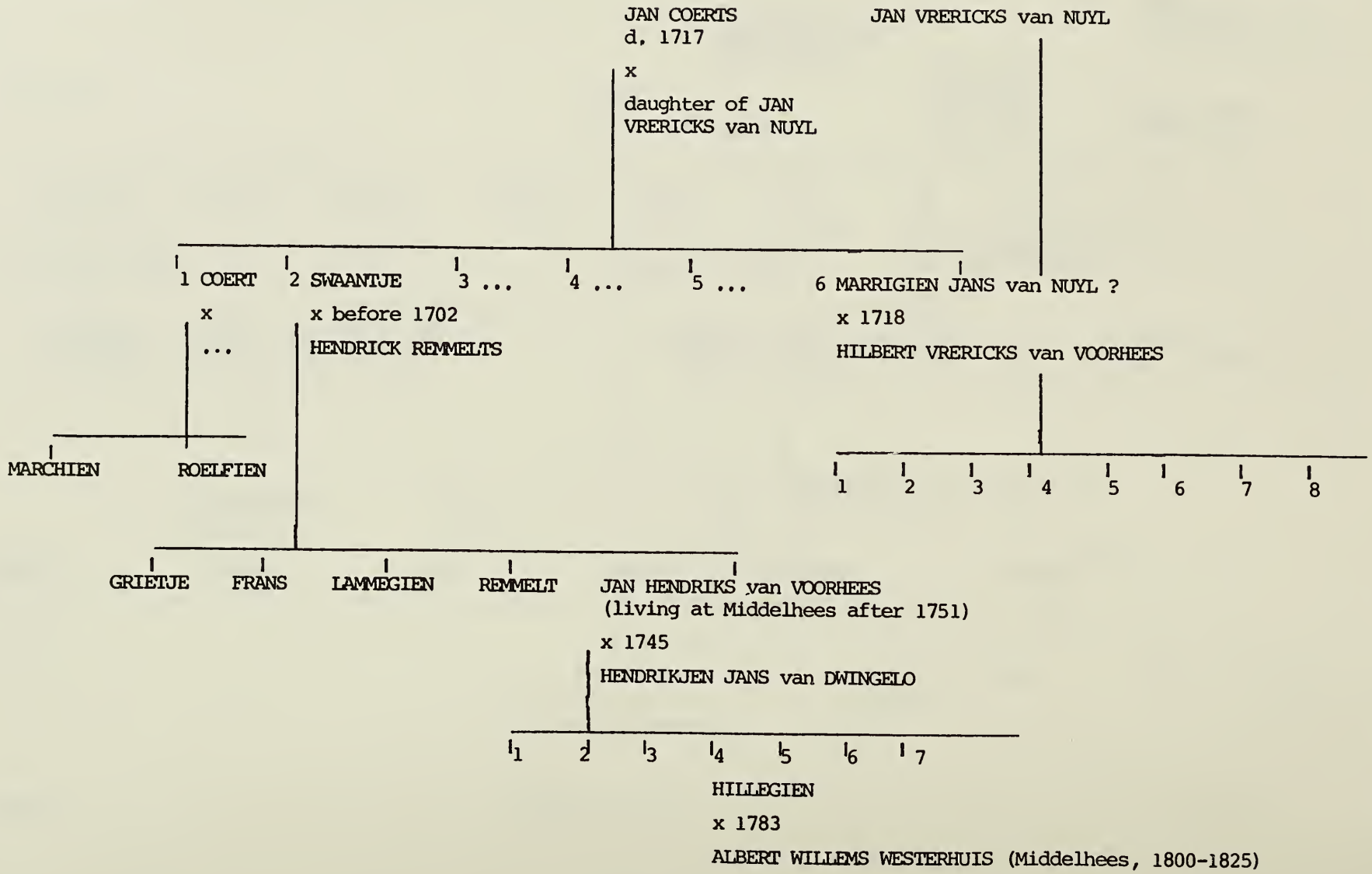


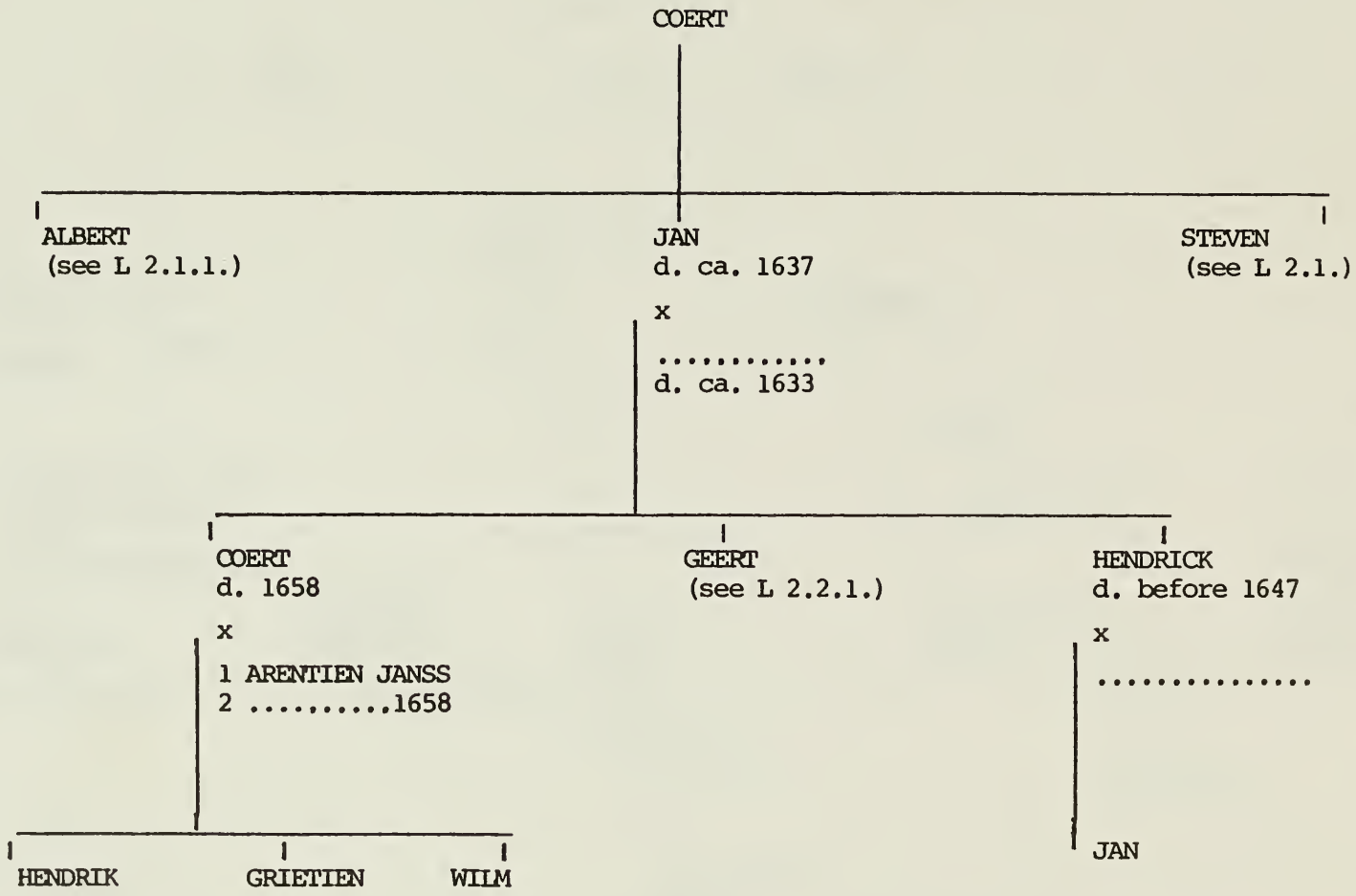

VOORHEES
ALBERT
d. ca. 1660
L 2.1.1.
HENDRICK
x
649 1 JANIEN JANSEN
658 2 MARIEN ALBERTS
HILBERT
x
.....
MARCHIEN
x
JAN MEWES
GEERTIEN
x
.....
COERT
x
SWAENTIEN WILLIEMS
LUYTGEN
x 1664
HILLICHJEN BARTELS
JAN
x
.....
WESSEL (1634-1680)
x 1664
GEESIEN JANS TALE (1637-..)
MARRIGIEN 1663
ALBERT 1669
CUNNICHJE
ALBERT
BARTELT 1665
HENDRICHIEN 1666
JAN 1668
JANNETIE 1665
HILBERT
(see L 2.1.2.)
JAN
(see L 2.1.3.)
ALBERT
x
AELTYN COOPS ADDEMERAELS
WESSEL
x
... van VENINGE
SWAENTYN 1683
JACKOBY ELYSEBET 1685
LUCAS
JAN
COERT

VOORHEES

L 2.1.2.




JAN COERTS
d, 1717
x
daughter of JAN VRERICKS van NUYL
JAN VRERICKS van NUYL
1 COERT
x
...
2 SWAANTJE
x before 1702
HENDRICK REMMELTS
3 ...
4 ...
5 ...
6 MARRIGIEN JANS van NUYL ?
x 1718
HILBERT VRERICKS van VOORHEES
MARCHIEN
ROELFIEN
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
GRIETJE
FRANS
LAMMEGIEN
REMMELT
JAN HENDRIKS van VOORHEES
(living at Middelhees after 1751)
x 1745
HENDRIKJEN JANS van DWINGELO
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
HILLEGIEN
x 1783
ALBERT WILLEMS WESTERHUIS (Middelhees, 1800-1825)


COERT
ALBERT
(see L 2.1.1.)
JAN
d. ca. 1637
x
.....
d. ca. 1633
STEVEN
(see L 2.1.)
COERT
d. 1658
x
1 ARENTIEN JANSS
2 1658
GEERT
(see L 2.2.1.)
HENDRICK
d. before 1647
x
.....
HENDRIK
GRIETIEN
WILM
JAN

L 2.2.1.

MIDDELHEES

GEERT
d. ca. 1657
x
.....

JAN COERTS
x
1 GRIETJEN GEUCHJES
1668
2 daughter of JAN
HENDRIKS from Yhorst

GEESYN
living in
Den Bosch

HILBERT
d. 1685
x
.....

LUETGER
d. before 1684
x
.....
daughter

HENDRICKJE
x 1660
KOOP JANS

HILBERT
x 1694
GRIETJE WILLEMS

GEERT
x 1680
JENTJEN WOLTERS
from the Oostbuur

a son, living
in Ruinen

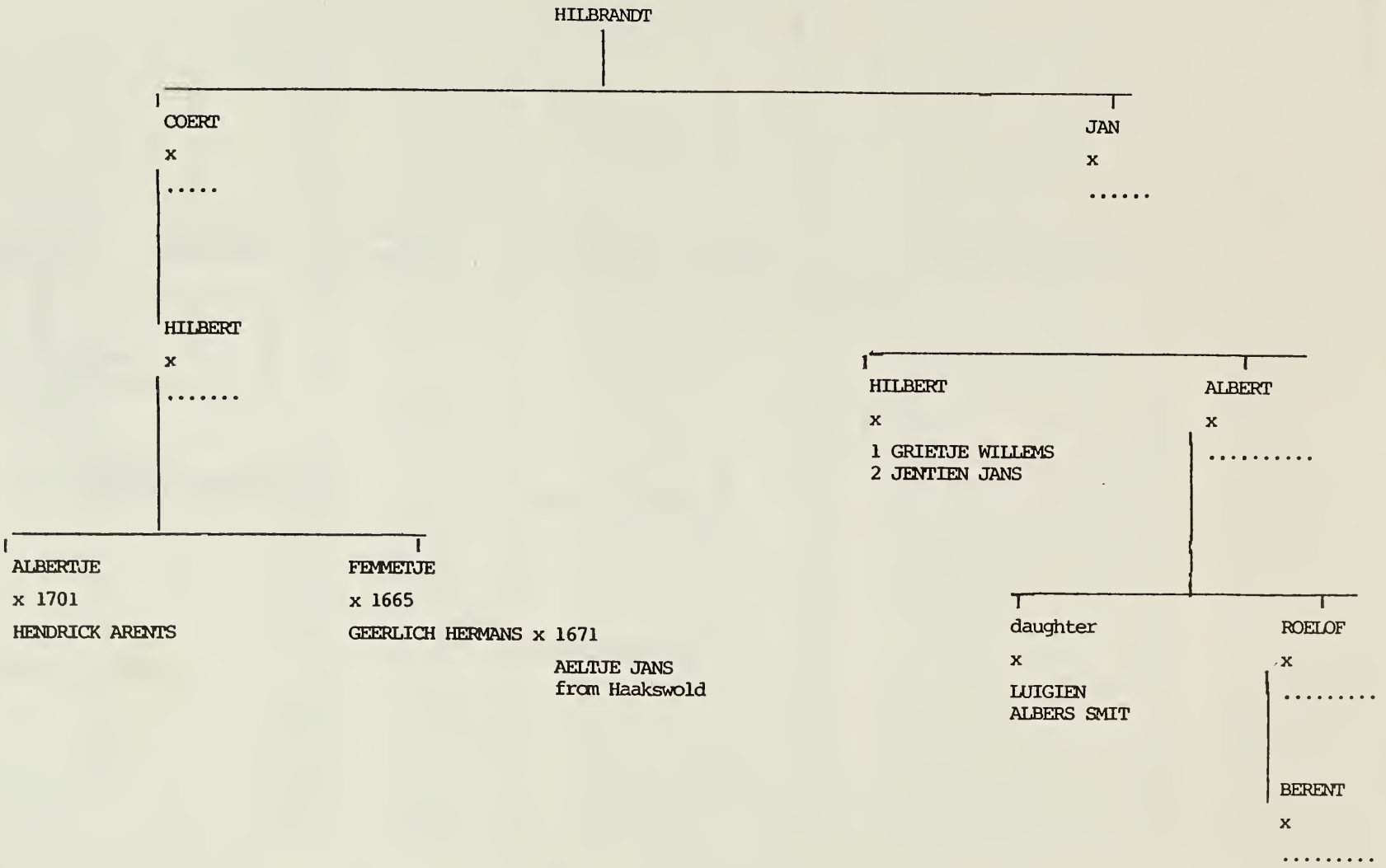
HILBERT
1684

GEESJEN
x
JACOB MICHIELS

ROELEFIEN
1691

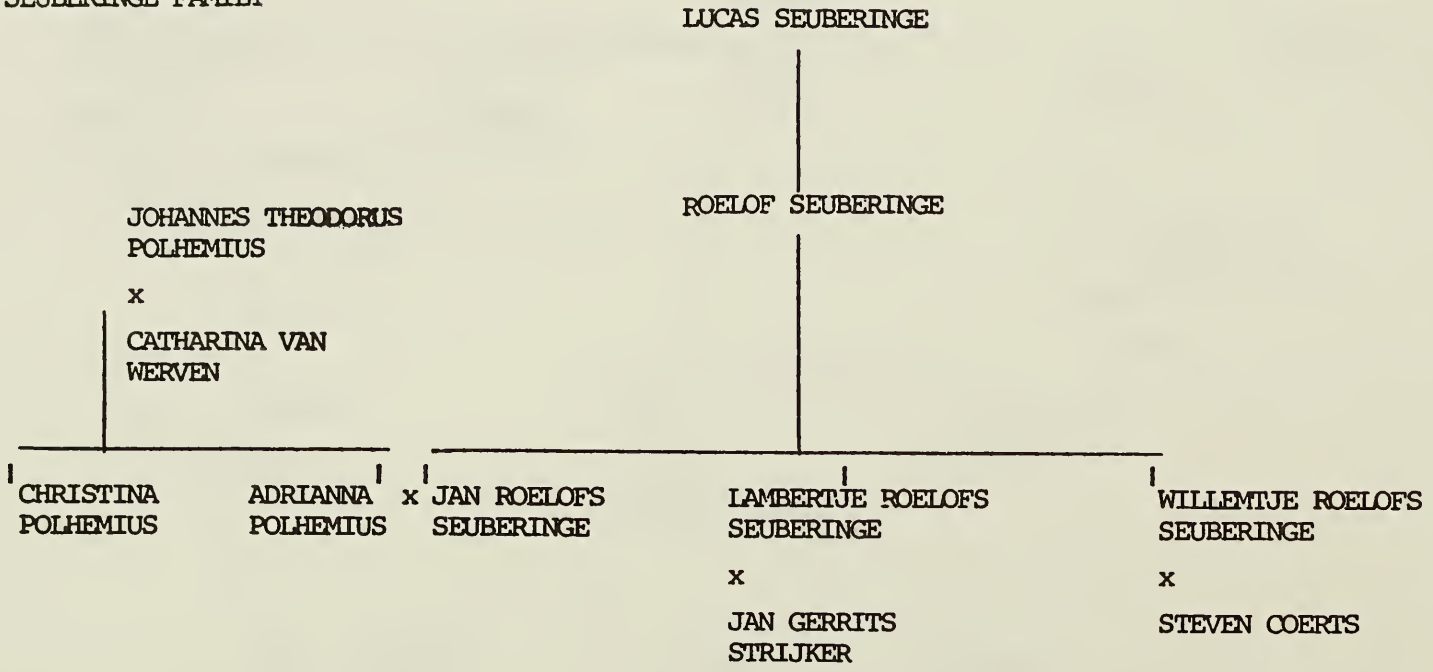
WOLTER HENDRIK ROELOF WOLTER HILBERT HARMEN LAMMEGIEN JANTIEN GEERT

ACHTERHEES


HILBRANDT
COERT
x
.....
JAN
x
.....
HILBERT
x
.....
HILBERT
x
1 GRIETJE WILLEMS
2 JENTIEN JANS
ALBERT
x
.....
ALBERTJE
x 1701
HENDRICK ARENTS
FEMMETJE
x 1665
GEERLICH HERMANS x 1671
AELTJE JANS
from Haakswold
daughter
x
LUIGIEN
ALBERS SMIT
ROELOF
x
.....
BERENT
x
.....

L 3.

The SEUBERINGE FAMILY



Footnotes I

1. For the nature and scale of this group-emigration see the article of Drs. Jan Folkerts: 'Drentse emigratie naar Amerika inde zeventiende eeuw', published in: 'Ons Waardeel, tijdschrift van de Drentse Historische Vereniging, vereniging voor-geschiedenis en genealogie', 1986 (2).

2. The chapter on Drenthe in time of war is based mainly on:Dr. J. Heringa etc. (ed.): 'Geschiedenis van Drenthe', Assen 1985, especially the chapters VIII and IX.

3. The benedictine convent at Ruinen was at first a 'dubbelklooster' (for both monks and nuns). About its foundation nothing is known. It is first mentioned in 1141, when the bishop of Utrecht granted to it the church of Steenwijk and some landed property. In 1325 the convent was moved to Dikninge, near the southern border of Drenthe. During the sixteenth century the convent gradually changed to an institution for young ladies from wealthy families. At the start of the seventeenth century the convent was secularized, but as a financial complex it continued to exist until the first decade of the nineteenth century.

4. Cartularium of the convent of Dikninge, Archief van Dikninge inv.no. 1, fol. 3. Also in Blok, P.J. and others(ed.): 'Oorkondenboek van Groningen en Drenthe', Groningen 1895–1899,vol. I, no. 39.

5. Most probable is a date between 1141 and 1180 (see also note no. 3).

6. A 'full farm' or 'full plough' was a kind of general standard description for farms which approximated a certain size:about 8,6 hectares of arable land and four horses. But it was used as a rough average, among others for fixing the rights of farms to the common lands. All three farms at Hees were somewhat smaller than the standard size.

7. Huisarchief Echten, inventory number (from now on abbreviated to: inv.no.) 745.

8. The sources describe this war as a revolt of the population of Drenthe, the 'Trentones', against their feudal lord, the bishop of Utrecht. The motive for this revolt is unknown as is who exactly were the 'Trentones': all inhabitants of Drenthe, or just some factions?

9. Braaksma, A.M. and others (ed.): 'Quedam Narracio de Groninghe, de Thrente, de Covordia et de diversis aliis sub diversis episcopis traiectensibus', bronnenuitgave van het historisch seminarium van de Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1977, p.102.

10. Archief van Dikninge, inv.nos. 10, 11 i-v, 12, 13, 18.

11. Ibidem, inv.nos. 11 iii, fol. 1vr.

12. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 845 (Ruinen). In here among others:
    A: Register of the land tax, 1642 (double)
    B: Stating of the haylands and greenlands, 1645
    C: Stating of the houses and yards, 1646
    D: Register of the land tax, 1646
    E: State of the measures of the meadowlands, 1660
    F: Petitions.

13. A 'mud' is a land measure. In Ruinen and the surrounding region the 'Steenwijk-measure' of 1 'mud' = 0,36 hectares was used.

14. A 'deimt', in the fifteenth and sixteenth century mostly called 'dagmaat' or 'dagwerk' is a land- measure, i.e. a piece of land of an area that can be harvested in one day. In Ruinen and the surrounding region it was reckoned at 0,67 hectares.

15. Oude Staten Archieven, inv. no. 845, Ruinen, p. 176.

16. A 'schepel' is a land measure, i.e. the area of land which can be sowed with one 'schepel' of grain.

17. The names of the meadowfields, like 'Heekersmaat', have for the greater part disappeared. For that reason these fields are very difficult to trace back again.

18. Oude Staten Archieven.

19. In the following I will also pay attention to 'Pol's erve', the farm where Steven Coerts lived between 1655 and 1660. More data about 'Pol's erve' can be found in the part in which Steven Coerts is described. An 'erve' is a farmyard. The Dutch term is used here because the term is used in a proper name.

20. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 636. Also in Archief van Dikninge, inv.no. 13.

21. Ibidem, inv.no. 1778, year 1619.

22. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778, year 1619.

23. The Dutch term 'Landschap' can be interpreted here as a province. Therefore, the farms meant here were domain goods, and in a certain sense state property.

24. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 14 (= resolutions of 'Drost and Deputies'), 14 November, 1625.

25. Ibidem, inv.no. 1778, years 1626 - 1633.

26. Ibidem, years 1633–1660.

27. Ibidem, inv.no. 6 (= resolutions of 'Ridderschap en Eigenerfden), 17 February, 1635.

28. Ibidem, inv.no. 1778, year 1644.

29. Heringa, 'Geschiedenis van Drenthe', p. 339.

30. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 841.

31. Ibidem, also inv.no. 1778, year 1644.

32. Archief van Dikninge, inv.no. 13, fol. 6d.

33. Ibidem, inv.no. 18.

34. Ibidem, inv.no. 14 and 15.

35. The convent of Dikninge owned the right of patronage over the church of Ruinen and could appoint the priest. Most of the time this was a monk of Dikninge.

36. Archief van Dikninge, inv.no. 233.

37. The title of 'rentmeester' means something like steward.

38. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778, years 1619–(1660) 1808.

39. Ibidem, years 1633 and 1660.

40. Ibidem, years 1653 and 1654.

41. Ibidem, year 1659.

42. Ibidem, inv.no. 14, among others 11 January, 1615.

43. The 'Etstoel', also called "Drost en 24 Etten', was the highest judicial body in Drenthe.

44. Gratama, S.: 'Eenige ordelen en verordeningen van den Drost en Etten van het landschap van Drenthe', p. 88.

45. Ibidem, p. 63.

46. Archief van Dikninge, inv.no. 231. The manuscript contains two death lists, one running from 1510 to 1523, the other from 1510 to 1579. So, they partly overlap. Apart from the lists the manuscript contains a lot of financial annotations. The death lists were also made up for financial reasons, as appears from the financial additions to the second list (the preachers probably received money and/of goods for praying for the deceased and other tasks). See also Appendix A.

47. Archief van Dikninge, inv.no. 232.

48. Ibidem, inv.no. 231, fol. 13r and 54d.

49. Ibidem, fol. 16d, 17r and 56r + v. The persons named in the margin certainly were the nearest relatives, who were due to pay the priest.

50. Ibidem, fol. 20d and 58r.

51. Ibidem, fol. 27r and 58d. The name 'Esse' is not sure, because the name is difficult to read.

52. Ibidem, fol. 64d.

53. Ibidem, fol. 61r.

54. Ibidem, fol. 62d.

55. Ibidem, fol. 64d.

56. Joosting, J.G.C. (ed.): 'Ordelen van den Etstoel van Drenthe, 1518–1604, 's-Gravenhage, 1893.

57. Ibidem, p. 119/120.

58. Archief van Dikninge, inv.no. 231, fol. 68r.

59. Ibidem, fol. 67r.

60. Ibidem, fol. 73r.

61. Ibidem, fol. 88d.

62. Ibidem, fol. 73d.

63. Ibidem, fol. 74d–96d.

64. Ibidem, inv.no. 11a, fol. 37r. 65. Ibidem, fol. 21d etc.

66. Ibidem, inv.no. 10.

67. Ibidem, inv.no. 232.

68. Ibidem, inv.no. 231, fol. 74d - 96d.

69. Among others in Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 638ii.

70. Archief van Dikninge, inv.no. 232.

71. The 'Weyde' was the name of an area in the parish of Ruinerwold, then called 'Blydenstede'; (weyde = meadow).

72. Ibidem, inv.no. 11i-v.

73. Ibidem, inv.no. 11i-v.

74. Ibidem, 11i, fol. 2d.

75. Ibidem, fol. 3r.

76. Huisarchief Echten, inv.no. 744.

77. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 642.

78. Ibidem, inv.no. 638ii.

79. Ibidem.

80. Ibidem, inv.no. 1778, year 1625.

81. Ibidem, year 1637.

82. 'Goorspraken van Drenthe', in: 'Werken der Vereeniging tot uitgave der bronnen van het oud- vaderlandsch recht', vol., 1928 - 1943, vol. 7, p. 367.

83. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 636.

84. Archief van Dikninge, inv.no. 11iii.

85. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778.

86. Ibidem, year 1628.

87. Ibidem, inv.no. 6, 17 February, 1635.

88. Ibidem, inv.no. 845, under 'doleantien' (= petitions).

89. Ibidem, inv.no. 1778, years 1654 and 1659.

90. Marriage registers of Amsterdam.

91. Baptismal register of Amsterdam.

92. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1785.

93. Marriage registers of Meppel.

94. Ibidem.

95. Baptismal registers of Meppel.

96. Oude Staten Archieven.

97. Marriage registers of Ruinerwold.

98. Baptismal registers of Ruinerwold.

99. Oude Staten Archieven.

100. Baptismal registers of Ruinerwold.

101. Marriage registers of Ruinerwold.

102. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 14, 20-11-1621.

103. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 841.

104. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 845, Ruinen.

105. Oude Staten Archieven.

106. P.R. Christoph 'Documents concerning Jan Elbinge's disputed patrimony: sources for biographical data on his family and friends', in: New York Genealogical and Biographical Record 1982, 193 - 197. [Ed: See Section VI of this volume.]

107. This 'impost op het genaal' was a tax on what was ground. It was collected per capita

108. Hendrick Williams, was he maybe a son of William Van Middelhees? (see later under Middelhees). The Oosterbuur is a hamlet near Meppel.

109. Oude Slaten Archieren, inv no. 1720 (= resolutions of Drost and Aldermen, 8 July 1642.

110. Ibidem, 2 December, 1642

111. Although the second resolution mentions the year 1640, it is most likely that the lawsuit was handled in court

112. Baptismal register of Meppel.

113. For example in: Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778, year 1623.

114. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 841.

115. Ibidem, Ruinen. The 'rise' was a fixed amount one had to pay besides the amount that depended on one's property. The crofters rise amounted to 800 guilders. The 'full farms' paid a 'rise' of 3000 guilders.

116. Ibidem.

117. Ibidem.

118. Ibidem.

119. Ibidem.

120. Ibidem, inv.no. 858. Wessel Alberts probably was a son of Albert Coerts, writer of the letter from 1686. [Ed: See Section IV of this volume]

121. Ibidem, inv.no. 1778, years 1650 and 1651.

122. Ibidem, year 1655.

123. Ibidem, years 1658–1660. Also in Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 643.

124. Ibidem, years 1655–1657.

125. Ibidem, inv.no. 643.

126. Ibidem.

127. Ibidem, inv.no. 845. See also note 12.

128. Ibidem.

129. Ibidem, inv. no. 1778, year 1659.

130. Baptismal registers of Meppel.

131. Archief van de stad Meppel, inv. no. 507.

132. Marriage registers of Ruinerwold.

133. Archief van het gericht Steenwijk, inv. no. 84+. The 'capittelspacht' was a rent intended for a chapter. The deeds do not mention which one. The 'memorienpacht' was paid for defrayment of services for the deceased.

134. The second letter of Hilbert Coerts, dated 9 February 1687, already mentioned that the house was sold. The sale must have taken place shortly before, because the deeds were made up only on 4 March of that year.

135. See the letter of Hilbert Coerts written to Coert Stevens, 9 February 1687. Though the acts do suggest that the house was bought and sold on the same day, this was not the case. The act describing that Jan Kiers bought the house, merely was a confirmation of an older act (which has not been found).

136. As for the person of Jan Kiers, especially concerning his parentage, further research is necessary. Research in the Stadsarchief Steenwijk yielded some data, but their value is unclear yet. For that reason I will list them here.

a) Already between 1622 and 1629 we come across a Jan Kiers who possessed a house in the 'Oosterstraat' in Steenwijk (!). It is impossible, however, in view of the year he deceased (1705) that this was 'our' Jan Kiers. It is not likely either that it was the same house;'our' Jan bought his house, and did not inherit it ! It remains possible however that we found his grandfather here. (Stadsarchief Steenwijk, inv. no. 173, = 'rekeningen van de thesaurier').

b) On April 29, 1637, a Jan Kiers bought the citizenship of Steenwijk for himself and his children. It is very unlikely again that this was 'our' Jan Kiers (having children at that time), but again it is possible that we came across his grandfather here. (Stadsarchief Steenwijk, inv. no. 539).

c) Several rentierrolls mention a Jan Kiers, having a son named Kier Jans. Was the latter the father of 'our' Jan ? (among others Stadsarchief of Steenwijk, inv.no. 6).

d) The following record clearly shows the difficulties: on 21 February 1661 a Jan Kiers is mentioned, chosen to be juror for the 'Oosterkluft' in Steenwijk. That he was a different Jan Kiers is clear enough (Stadsarchief Steenwijk, inv. no. 5)In short, the name of Jan Kiers was a frequent one, not only in Steenwijk, but in Meppel and the whole of Drenthe, too. For this reason the person of Jan Kiers needs more investigation than was possible until now.

137. Oude Staten Archieven, inv. no. 1778, years 1650 etc.

138. Archief van de Etstoel van drenthe inv. no. 133, p. 270 272. The 'gosprake' or 'goorspraak' was in plain terms, a local court of justice.

139. Archief van de heerlijkheid Ruinen, inv. no. 50, p. 10. Henrick Munster Wilhelm van Bernsauw was lord of Ruinen at that time. The 'Gruijtte' and the 'Rietyen' were field names of some pieces of land near Ruinen We may assume that with the 'Rietyen' is meant the same land as with the 'Regien'; this is not completely sure however.

140. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778.

141. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1785.

142. Marriage registers of Hoogeveen.

143. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778, year 1677.

144. Oude Staten Archieven.

145. Church registers of Ruinen.

146. Archieven van de schultengerechten, Ruinen.

147. Church registers of Ruinen.

148. Ibidem.

149. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778.

150. Baptismal registers of Ruinen.

151. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778, year 1751.

152. Baptismal registers of Ruinen.

153. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778.

154. Ibidem.

155. Registers of the real property of Ruinen.

156. Oude Staten Archieven, inv. no. 636. Also in Archief van Dikninge, inv. no. 13.

157. Oude Staten Archieven, inv. no. 1778.

158. Ibidem, inv. no. 14, October 27, 1614.

159. Ibidem, November 20, 1621.

160. Ibidem, April 10, 1624 and inv. no. 1778, year 1623.

161. Archief van het gericht Steenwijk, inv. no. 108+.

162. Oude Staten Archieven, inv. no. 1778, year 1623.

163. Archief van het gericht Steenwijk, inv. no. 120+.

164. Jan rented Middelhees till 1638, whereupon the farm was taken over by his sons Geert and Hendrick. We thus may assume that Jan died about that year.

165. Marriage registers of Meppel.

166. Archief van de stad Meppel, inv.no. 508.

167. Stadsarchief Steenwijk, inv. no. 5.

168. Oude Staten Archieven, inv. no. 845.

169. Ibidem.

170. Archief van het stadsgericht Steenwijk, inv.no. 56+, p. 203.
171. Archief van het stadsgericht Steenwijk, inv.no. 57+, p. 27.
172. Oude Staten Archieven, inv. no. 1778, years 1638–1660.
173. Ibidem, inv. no. 845.
174. Ibidem, inv. no. 588.
175. Archief van het gericht Steenwijk, inv.no. 20+.
176. Ibidem.
177. Ibidem.
178. Ibidem.
179. Ibidem, inv.no. 21+.
180. Ibidem, inv.no. 20+.
181. Ibidem, inv.no. 21+.
182. Ibidem, inv.no. 20+.
183. Ibidem.
184. Ibidem.
185. Ibidem.
186. Oude Staten Archieven, inv. no. 1778.
187. Marriage registers of Meppel.
188. Baptismal registers of Ruinen.
189. Ibidem.
190. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778.
191. Ibidem.
192. Ibidem.
193. Marriage registers of Ruinen.
194. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778.
195. Marriage registers of Ruinen.
196. Oude Staten Archieven, inv. no. 1778.
197. Archief van de hypotheekbewaarder.
198. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 642.
199. Ibidem, inv.no. 1778.
200. Ibidem, year 1642.
201. Ibidem, inv.no. 427.
202. Ibidem, inv.no. 1778, years 1645 and 1647.
203. Ibidem, years 1653 and further.
204. Ibidem, inv.no. 6, 20 February, 1655.

205. Ibidem, 23 February, 1658.

206. Ibidem, inv.no. 1778, year 1661.

207. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778.

208. Marriage registers of Ruinen.

209. Baptismal registers of Ruinen.

210. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778.

211. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778.

212. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778.

213. Registers of real property of Ruinen.

214. Heringa, J.: 'Geschiedenis van Drenthe', chapter VIII.

215. Folkerts, J.: 'Drentse emigratie', p. 78. [Section III of this volume]

216. Stadsarchief van Meppel, inv.no. 1, fol. 11a; see also Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 158, fol. 58r.

217. Baptismal register of Meppel, '1629 October 7, kindt Christina, vader Theodorus Polheim, bedienaer des H. Evangeliums alhier' (= 1629 October 7, child Christina, father Theodorus Polheim, minister of the H. Evangelium at this place).

218. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 841, 'Theodorus Polhemius prediger huyrman van Wolter Jans huys op 1800 f. compt 6 - 0 - 0' (= Theodorus Polhemius preacher, tenant of Wolter Jans' house at 1800 f. comes to 6 - 0 - 0).

219. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 158, fol. 58r.

220. Folkerts, J.: 'Drentse emigratie', p. 78. [See Section III of this volume]

221. O' Callaghan, E.B.:"Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York", 2 vol., I p. 379-380).

222. The Feast day of Otmarus is 16 November!

223. Notarial archives, protocol nr. 2487, 1660 April 4 and April 18.

224. A "mud" is a land measure. In Ruinen and the surrounding region the "Steenwijk-measure" of 1 "mud" = 0,36 hectares was used.

225. A "dagwerk" or "deint" is a landmeasure, i.e. a piece of land of an area that can be harvested in one day. In Ruinen and the surrounding area it was reckoned at 0.67 hectares.

226. The Dutch term "waardeel" can be interpreted as a share in the commons around the village that a certain farm could use.

227. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 845, tax registers of Zwiggelte (Dwingelo).

228. A "full farm" or "full plough" was a kind of general standard description for farms which approximated a certain size: about 8,6 hectares of arable land and four horses. But it was used as a rough average, among others for fusing the rights of farms to the common lands, (thus for fixing the "waardelen", see note 216).

229. "Goorspraken van Drenthe" in;" Werken der Vereeniging tot uitgave der bronnen van het oud- vaderlandsch recht", 5 vol., 1928- 1943, IV-23, 24, 48, 49, 104, V- 106.

230. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 621.

231. "Goorspraken", V-234.

232. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 14, 2 September 1615 (on film, VIII-16- 3).

233. Ibidem, inv.no. 841, tax registers of Zwiggelte (Dwingelo).

234. A "schat" and a "spint" are 1/4 and 1/16 mud.

235. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 845, tax registers of Zwiggelte (Dwingelo).

236. "Goorspraken", II-135.

237. Ibidem, II-56-58.

238. Ibidem, IV-104.

239. Joosting, J.G.C. (ed.): "Ordelen van den Etstoel van Drenthe, 1518-1604", 's-Gravenhage, 1893, p. 205.

240. Archief van de Etstoel, inv.no. 14, II fol. 211 ro.

241. Also Jan Kiersen.

242. Zwiggelte, a hamlet near Beilen in the province of Drenthe.

243. A lotting was a court-day in Drenthe at the time of a 'lower' court

244. See Appendix H.3

245. See Appendix H.2

246. A 'Schultambt is the district of a 'Schulte', a kind of sheriff

247. 'Keurnofen' were persons who acted as witnesses

248. A 'marke' is in this context a community of land owners who have rights to the adjacent uncultivated lands

249. A 'landdrost' was a judicial official

250. A 'rentambt' was the district or complex that was administrated by a 'rentmeester' who, was an official of the 'landschap'

Section II

DRENTHE AND NEW NETHERLAND
Two Outer Provinces at the Time of Emigration

BY J. FOLKERTS

This manuscript is based on the talk given at the 57th Annual Meeting of the Van Voorhees Association at the historic Church on the Green in Hackensack, New Jersey on September 30, 1989.

Drs. Folkert summarized insights gained during the research program carried out in 1987 for the Association in collaboration with D. J. Wijmer (see Section I). He also discussed probable reasons for the emigration of Steven Coerte Van Voorhees in 1660 and his compatriots from Drenthe and New Netherlands.

Drs. Folkerts has educational and professional backgrounds as a journalist and historian. He has published on New Netherlands and Dutch New York, with emphasis on agriculture in 17th century Dutch New York. He has been associated with the State Archives in Drenthe and Groningen, and is presently an archivist at the State Archivist in Overijssel at Zwolle.

Drenthe and New Netherland

As a supervisor of the research carried out in the Van Voorhees ancestry in the past few years and as a speaker from the Netherlands, I am expected to give you some idea of the results of our efforts. Those of you who hope I will submit today the complete biography of Steven Coerts van Voorhees, the first of your forebears to emigrate to the colony of New Netherland, I will have to disappoint. And those of you who may have some faint hope that I will present to them the proof of a direct blood line running back to Charlemagne or the Roman emperors will not go home very satisfied either.

In spite of all this, I think the results of our concerted efforts in the Dutch archives, and in particular those of the province of Drenthe, are more than we possibly could have expected, especially taking into account the very fragmentary and scattered historical sources that were available.

Before I get to the core of my speech, which will deal with the remarkable similarities and differences between the province of Drenthe and the colony of New Netherland at the time of emigration, I will try to illuminate the life of Steven Coerts van Voorhees, who at the age of sixty, and accompanied by his own family and other relatives, took a giant step by starting a new life thousands of miles from his home country.

What did we know of Steven Coerts before our research project took off, almost three years ago?

The few facts of his life in Drenthe that were known, were almost completely based on the research carried out by Schaap and Poortman, who never intended to do extensive research.[1] As a matter of fact, there were only a few references to Steven Coerts before 1660, the year of emigration. One pertained to a tax register of 1642, by which we knew that Steven Coerts by that time rented a very small farm in Ruinen, and a reference of 1658, in a rent register. At that time, two years before his departure, Steven rented a substantial farm, about five times as large as the one of 1642.

All the other facts of Steven Coerts' life we knew of before our research was carried out, were based on evidence in American sources, that is, sources after 1660.

Although Dick Wijmer and I were sometimes amazed at the tiny scraps of evidence we were able to find in the sources about Steven Coerts, contrary to all expectations, I am afraid that the first part of his life remains rather obscure.

Steven was a son of Coert tho Middelhees, who is mentioned in the 1595 rentier rolls of Dikninge, the convent at the border of Overijssel, that

was one of the great landowners in this region. Because Steven Coerts later called himself Van Voorhees it is fairly certain that Coert and his family moved from the Middelhees to the Voorhees farm, some time between 1595 and 1599/1600 when Steven was born.

At this point, I need to explain something about the geographical setting. It's not too complicated, and it will enhance the understanding of your ancestor's social and physical environment considerably.

The farms of Voorhees, Achterhees and Middelhees, together with a few others, in the seventeenth century formed the hamlet of Hees. Today, those of you who have been there, will confirm this, Hees is still a hamlet.

A short distance from Hees, the village of Ruinen was situated, the center of the parish of the same name; a parish with some 800 or 900 inhabitants.

In its turn the parishes of Ruinen and Ruinerwold, together formed the area in which the lord of Ruinen had the right of lower and higher jurisdiction.

The two parishes in which the lord of Ruinen was in judicial control were what we call in Dutch a "heerlijkheid".

In most American publications this word is translated as "manor", which is correct only as long as we keep in mind that the lord of Ruinen didn't have the private ownership of all the lands in his manor; quite on the contrary, there were many small and large other landholders, like the convent of Dikninge.

The three farms of Voorhees, Middelhees and Achterhees were so-called "full" farms, the tenants on these farms each used four horses and had a full share in the commons. The tenants exploiting these three farms were all relatives of Steven Coerts. I will not at this point explain who rented which farm during which years: you can all read this in the forthcoming publications. I will now turn back to Steven's life.

We first encountered his name in the Drenthe archives only in 1633. It is a simple note in the accounts of Dikninge, the monastery, which reads:

"I, Hans Jansen, the undersigned, glazier, acknowledge to have received the amount of two guilders, eleven stivers, from Steven Kuers, for a new window both with puttying up and with 3 windvanes having fixed to it. I Hans Jansen glazier".

This document—be it not very spectacular—proves one thing for certain: Steven Coerts was a tenant of Dikninge in 1633, otherwise Steven had no right to be reimbursed for the window. At the same time however, it poses another problem: we don't find Steven's name in the rolls of the tenants for 1633.

Therefore he probably was a sub-tenant at this time. There is evidence that he lived in or near the near-by town of Meppel in this period.

Then, for a number of years, Steven Coerts disappears again from our records. In 1641, Steven is accused of tax- dodging by Anna Laurents, the farmer of the duty on flour in Meppel. It is an interesting case, because Steven defends himself by saying that he had reported the number of persons in his family to his lessor. Steven was supposed to have concealed four persons. Equally important is the information about his dwelling-place. On December 2, 1642 he apparently lived in Ruinen, but in the summer of 1641—to which period the tax-case pertains—he lived near the town of Meppel.

It is certain that he lived in the Oosterboer, a small hamlet just outside Meppel, because his son Wessel was baptized in Meppel on September 25, 1640, and is registered as a son of Steven Coerts "from the Oosterboer".

The house in which Steven lived after 1641, was torn down in or shortly after 1648. He then moved to Pol's erve, although there is a small possibility that he temporarily rented a farm elsewhere in or near Ruinen. The records are somewhat confusing on this: from 1658 till 1660 he is mentioned as the tenant on Pol's erve; also in 1655, but in this last year his name was deleted and replaced by another. In any case, Steven Coerts lived on another farm in Ruinen before 1655.

Leaving aside all the minor details and secondary evidence, these are some of the new findings on the life of Steven Coerts. As I warned you before, this is by no means a complete biography. We were very lucky however to find a lot of evidence on his near relatives in Drenthe, and on the farms in Hees, and through this we have been able to put the pieces together of his life and times.

Let us now widen our perspective for a moment and look at the circumstances of the emigration.

As you know, on April 15, 1660, Steven and his family, including a son-in-law, set sail for the New World, on the Bonte Koe, the Spotted Cow.

Steven formed part of a group of 39 emigrants, all hailing from the south-west of Drenthe. Two years later, another group of 23 emigrants, from the same small area in Drenthe, departed for the New World. More than 6% of the population of Ruinen left this parish in these years for America. Among the emigrants on the ship of Steven Coerts was another large family of Ruinen, that of Focke Jans, who lived out his life on Peter Stuyvesant's Bowery and a family of six persons, from near-by Ruinerwold.

How on earth did these two groups from a region far from the bustling sea-ports of the Dutch Republic, reach the decision to emigrate?

In the first place we would like to know how Steven and his compatriots became aware of the possibilities in the Dutch colony on the American seaboard.

The answer to this question is a simple one: they had their predecessors! It was probably in or shortly before 1651 that Gerrit Jacobs and Jan Stryker and their family emigrated from Ruinen to New Netherland. Both of them in short time became prominent members of the colonial population.

Jan Stryker played a central role in founding and settling the village of Midwout, the present Flatbush on Long Island. Several other immigrants from the south-west of Drenthe, settled in or near this village in the 1650's.

One of the most influential members of the new communities on the western tip of Long Island, arrived in New Netherland by mere coincidence. This happened when in September 1654 a French ship appeared at the roadstead of New Amsterdam. The ship was packed with refugees from Brazil, where the Dutch earlier in that year had been forced to surrender their last stronghold Recife to the Portuguese, thus ending the short-lived dream of a Dutch South Atlantic Empire stretching from Angola to Brazil.

Among the refugees was Johannes Theodorus Polhemius, who had been a minister in Brazil for sixteen years, and what is more, served the Dutch Reformed Communities of Gieten and Meppel, for ten years from 1624 to 1634. When Polhemius had left Meppel in 1634, one of the people in the parish he left behind in all probability was Steven Coerts, who lived near that town by this time!

Steven Coerts and Johannes Polhemius would meet again in New Netherland. Polhemius was persuaded to stay in New Netherland and to serve the villages of Midwout, New Amersfoort and Breuckelen as their first minister.

For Steven Coerts and his family, there were even stronger, more personal motives to join their fellow- countrymen from Drenthe. When looking at the success-story of Jan Strycker from Ruinen, who from a simple gunsmith became one of the leading citizens of New Netherland in just a few years, we should not forget that he was married to a certain Lammertje Seuberingh. This couple may well have been instrumental in persuading other people from their home- village to come over. Lammertje Seuberingh was the sister- in-law of Steven Coerts, and so strong and close family-ties linked the groups of Stryker and Voorhees in these years.

We can try to summarize the subsequent group emigrations by—just for the sake of the argument—calling the Strykers group I, the group of

Steven Coerts in 1660 group II and the group of 1662 group III. Between these groups there was a trickle of individual immigrants from Drenthe seeking new opportunities in the New World. But it is clear that group I paved the way for groups II and III. It is easy to imagine that Steven Coerts and his family, when arriving in New Netherland, and subsequently settling in New Amersfoort, almost must have felt at home, with their relatives at a few miles distance, listening on Sundays to the sermons of their former minister Polhemius, and with so many people nearby speaking the all-too-familiar soft eastern tongue of south-west Drenthe.

At this point, I have to add a few lines based on my research in New York last week. Even although I haven't seen all of the Dutch town records yet, it struck me how close the emigrants stayed together in their new environment.

I will give you a few examples. In December 1660, seven months after the Spotted Cow left Amsterdam, two of the passengers on this ship from Drenthe met before the court of schout and schepenen of Midwout (Flatbush). Apparently, they were very busy setting up for themselves. Pieter Jansen Schoenmaker claimed to have contracted with Jan Seubering, a carpenter and a brother-in-law of Steven Coerts, for the building of a house by Seubering at a price of 450 guilders. This was on the third of December. According to contract, the house had to be ready before Christmas time. Seubering however, couldn't fulfill his obligations, as he had not yet finished building his own house! [2]

Two other references also relate to Pieter Jansen Schoenmaker. Pieter Jansen didn't enjoy his newly built house very long. He apparently died before October 1662. Probably, there were no longer any hard feelings between Pieter Jansen's widow and Jan Seubering, because Jan Seubering and another man from Drenthe, Peter Lott, were appointed guardians over the two children of Jansen.[3]

Now we have discovered that Steven Coerts and his family didn't go alone, that his relatives went before him, and their fellow-countrymen from nearby places went with him and with some of the following ships, our perspective on the emigration has somewhat widened.

Nevertheless, the answer to the question why they did go remains unsolved. No letter of Steven Coerts or other direct evidence has survived in which the motive for emigration was simply stated. On the other hand, we fortunately don't depend on mere speculation. Too many tiny scraps of evidence are all pointing in the same direction.

The emigration of the above-mentioned groups from south- west Drenthe fits in a wider pattern of decrease in population in this area. Between

1630 and 1672 the number of households in Ruinen for instance dropped from 110 to 89.[4]

The tax burden in Drenthe definitely increased since the introduction of the land taxes of 1643.

Finally, the economic downturn that hit most of Western Europe after mid-century, also struck in Drenthe. During the 1650's there were a number of consecutive years with low prices for rye.

So far for the "push-factors". Let us now have a look at the so-called "pull-factors". Among these the agricultural opportunities in New Netherland, and especially in its agricultural core on Long Island, stands out as a very strong one.

New lands were cleared daily on Long Island and in the same year that Steven Coerts emigrated the village of Boswijck was officially founded and got its own bench of justice.

In our research we found that the different branches of the Van Voorhees-family rented the farms of Voor-, Achter- and Middelhees for generations; we may safely assume that there was by common law some kind of hereditary succession. However, the number of farms to be rented from Dikninge was very small, and so there always was a problem of the younger sons. They probably had to be bought off, for not having a share in the profits of successful exploitation of one of the large tenant-farms. This must have been the case with Steven Coerts, who had a least two brothers.

One of his brothers, Albert Coerts van Voorhees, had succeeded his father on the Voorhees-farm and used this farm from 1614 through 1661.

Time and again Albert requested the governing body of Drenthe for reduction of rent: he did so in 1635, 1645, 1647, 1653, 1654 and 1659. The request of 1659—remember, this is the year before Steven's emigration—sent by the steward of Dikninge on this behalf to Drost and Deputies of Drenthe, shows us the bad state of affairs at Voorhees. Speaking of the farm, the request states: . . . (that) his house, barn and sheepfold need urgent repairs, before it falls totally into decay . .

Steven Coerts' other brother was Jan Coerts, who rented the largest farm in the village, Middelhees, from early in the century till about 1638, when he died.

Although we know that the farmers in Hees all were hard pressed by taxes, high rent and low prices and we have evidence of the bad state of repair their houses were in, we should not forget that the four farms of Voorhees, Middelhees, Achterhees and Pol's erve, rented by Steven and

his relatives, were all considered to be large farms, situated in the best part of Drenthe.

We should not forget either, that although rye and buckwheat played a big part in the agriculture of this region, and although the rent had to be paid in grain, cattle were the real source of prosperity in the villages of south-west Drenthe.

This is easily illustrated by the number of heads on each of the farms in 1641. In that year Voorhees possessed 20 head, Middelhees 21, Achterhees 22 and Pol's erve still 16.

Apart from this, a few decades later each of the farms was taxed for four horses, the standard number for a so-called "full-farm" in Drenthe. On top of this, the farms must have had a considerable number of sheep, given the fact that in 1630 there lived a "common shepherd" on Voorhees.

Taking into account the size of these farms, it comes as no surprise that the families living on the four farms also were large. In 1630, 40 people were reported to be living on the farms. All four farms represented a considerable value and—what is more—apart from the lands rented from Diknige, each of the tenants also had some land in private ownership.

The tenants of Voorhees held 14 acres. Steven Coerts must have managed to get a fair amount of money, because it was only six months after his arrival in 1660, when he bought a farm in New Amersfoort for 3400 guilders. We should bear in mind however, that only 400 guilders was paid in cash, the rest in "good strung, negotiable seawant".

One of the letters suggests that a man with 2000 guilders of his own money to take with him to New Netherland, would have a good start and would prosper in time. This is about the same as the author of the famous pamphlet on the True Distinctions Between Warm and Cold Countries, Ottho Keye, says that is needed to start in New Netherland. Keye suggests 1850 guilders to be a sound financial basis for starting a farm.[5] As we know, Steven Coerts had even more than 2000 guilders, and he made an excellent start, not just for himself, but especially for his sons.

When in 1675 all property in the village of New Amersfoort was taxed, Steven Coerts turned out to own 63 acres, not only more than twice as much as he rented at Pol's erve, but even considerably more than his relatives at home on Voorhees exploited! As to the animals on the farm, in this respect the farm in New Netherland was not very different from those at home. Steven had 14 cows, 1 ox, 4 horses and 2 hogs.[6]

Steven's oldest son Coert even prospered more in his new environment. In 1675, he owned 92 acres, three oxen, four horses and 14 cows,

and Jan Kiers, his son-in-law, owned a farm about as large as the one of Steven Coerts with 4 horses and 9 cows.

Eight years later, in 1683, the pater familias had almost doubled his property. Steven Coerts then owned no fewer than 116 acres.[7]

But even then he was surpassed by his eldest son, who had 126 acres!

If we want to compare the situation at home in Drenthe with the new fatherland at the other side of the Atlantic, it is especially interesting to see what became of Steven's younger sons. Hadn't that been one of the important motives for emigration? Between the lines of the letters the relatives in New Netherland and Drenthe sent each other, we see this assumption confirmed.

The relatives back home wondered about the prosperity of Jan Kiers, Steven's son-in-law. Hadn't he been a prodigal spender too, they wrote. In 1683, Lucas Stevens, second son of Steven Coerts, had managed to become owner of a tract of land of 72 acres, 3 horses and 15 cows, while his younger brothers Jan and Albert were taxed for private possessions at a value about half that of Lucas. Apparently, the rank of the sons played a key role in their ability to acquire independent land holdings. In 1683, we see that the fourth had no acres at all. We need not wonder about the fate of this youngest son. Albert Stevens not only had recently married and owned 3 horses and 10 cows; he may have been on the verge of setting up for himself and his wife elsewhere.

We have reason to believe this because three years later, we find the young couple on the other side of the Hudson, enlisted in the Dutch Reform congregation of . . . Hackensack, New Jersey.

Now we have seen something of the start of the successful career of Steven Coerts and his family in their new environment, let us turn back to Drenthe and compare it with New Netherland.

This may seem odd, maybe even far-fetched, to compare a small Dutch province with the soon-to-be Empire State and its surroundings. But this is all hindsight. Neither Steven Coerts nor any of his relatives could have possibly known, that the little harbour of New Amsterdam that was the place of their arrival in 1660, and that passed as the capital of New Netherland, would at one time be the biggest city in the world and the hub of the eastern U.S.

In the debates of their high mightinesses the States- General, the federal governing body of the United Dutch Provinces, New Netherland as well as Drenthe played only minor roles. The regents in the Hague were interested in both regions only in time of crisis. Illustrative of this is the fact that Drenthe was the only Dutch province that could be denied its seats in

the States-General: it was too thinly populated and it contributed too little, just 1%, to the federal treasury.

Even within the framework of the West India Company, New Netherland wasn't very important. The majority of its directors and large shareholders were almost obsessed by the riches of Brazil and by profits of trade, not of colonization.

Both Drenthe and New Netherland were considered to be the sources of mainly one product. While New Netherland in the eyes of many was a one-crop economy, mainly interesting because of its beavers; the all-important attraction of Drenthe was to be found in the huge marshes of its frontiers; peat was a major source of energy in the seventeenth century.

If we now compare the smaller areas of western Long Island and southwest Drenthe in 1660, there are also a few striking similarities.

Both were areas of mixed husbandry, although in southwest Drenthe as well as western Long Island, cattle raising was of major importance.

As near-by market places for Steven Coerts both in Drenthe and in New Netherland, there were the small towns of Meppel and New Amsterdam, both places of between 1000 and 1500 inhabitants at this time. Both towns were situated at about the same distance from Steven's farm.

In Drenthe and in this part of New Netherland the density of population was about the same, that is about 7 people per square kilometer.

But looking more closely to the area of south-west Drenthe, we find a population density of about 20 per square kilometer in Ruinen. Recently I have been able to assess the percentage of all lands in Kings County that was under cultivation in 1675. This was about 15%; if we only count the arable it was about 7%. This is close to the 5.8% of central Drenthe in 1630 that was cultivated at that time. Even the average household size is about the same. In Ruinen in 1630 we find 5.3; my estimate for Kings County about 1675 is 5.4 !

Turning back once more to Drenthe and New Netherland in general: even in the way they were treated by the historical profession, there is a remarkable similarity. Both were traditionally treated in stereotypes: Drenthe as the province of poor people living amidst endless moors and woods in their tiny, backward villages and shepherds roaming with their herds through a desolate landscape.

New Netherland, due to 19th century authors, mainly from the U.S., was seen as a colonial failure, where an oppressive regime of autocrats like Van Twiller, Kieft and Stuyvesant hindered development in the name of fortune-hunters, beaver- merchants, and a short-sighted Company.

Happily, in both cases, modern historians have proved these stereotypes to be wrong.

Both regions didn't fit into the success-story of the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic; geographically, economically and politically they were only of marginal importance. Neither Drenthe nor New Netherland were one-crop economies; in both regions agriculture has been discovered to be more important than was often thought. While Bieleman in his recent dissertation on farming in Drenthe between 1600 and 1910 collected substantial evidence proving Drenthe to be a part of a larger economic and agricultural network stretching over a large part of Northwestern Europe, I hope in my own research to prove that farming in New Netherland was a major source of income, while at the same time I hope to refute the old notion that in New Netherland "every farmer was a trader".

Of course, in time the development of Drenthe and New Netherland widely diverged. Today, Drenthe still is the least urbanized province of the Netherlands, and the most thinly populated region of our country, while New York ... well, you probably know more about that than I do.

Let me finish my speech by making some remarks on the place of the research into your ancestry in the wider field of research into the New York Dutch past in general. In recent years our knowledge of New Netherland and Dutch New York has considerably deepened. I don't have to remind you of the books of Kenney, Condon, Bachman, Rink and others in the field. These books and many articles have been instrumental in the revival of New Netherland history since the 1960s. I don't have to bring to mind either the key role that has been played by the Albany-based New Netherland Project (Peter Christoph and Charles Gehring) and also by the Holland Society of New York and especially its magazine De Halve Maen.

We now know a lot more about the culture, the economy and many other aspects of Dutch New York than we did 20 or 30 years ago. But what do we know about the people of New Netherland? Demography and emigration are two related subjects that have been surprisingly little studied. Many a book has been devoted to the emigration and demographic development of French Canadians, New Englanders and even Dutch South Africans, but about the Dutch settlers of New York we are not able to answer even the most essential questions, like how many people did go, from where did they come and why?

Although the importance of the notarial archives of Amsterdam as a relatively new source for the study of New Netherland has been recognized since the 1960s, I'm afraid that the last systematic search in the Dutch archives has been made by .... John Romeyn Brodhead around 1840 ! This

is strange, the more so because the Dutch archives on all levels are comparatively well organized and easily accessible for everyone. Don't think that Brodhead saw everything when he visited the Netherlands. At this time, the Dutch archival system was only in its embryonical state and his research was mainly restricted to Amsterdam and The Hague.

Research like ours sheds light on an individual case of emigration and a family history, and it reminds us that demography and emigration are not matters of mere numbers only, but also the stories of people of flesh and blood. Why not build on this successful research by pooling resources with other organizations in the field and start a program of mapping Dutch archival sources that can be used for genealogy as well as for other types of New Netherland research? And why not start a program of translating and editing the rich sources of the notarial archives in Amsterdam, as far as they pertain to New Netherland? I hope you will forgive me for putting these ideas forward, but in my opinion great opportunities for research on New Netherland, especially in the Netherlands, are still waiting. Associations like yours can play a key role by contributing to a research program that will be advantageous to yourself as well as to every New Netherland researcher.

I'm very grateful for the opportunity the Van Voorhees Association gave me to tell you something about our research; it is a great pleasure to be among people who take such a lively interest in their Dutch past; and I hope that—amidst a vast Anglosaxon majority—you will keep the heritage of the Dutch founders of New York alive for generations to come.

Footnotes

1) H. P. Schaap, "De vier brieven", Nieuwe Drentse Volksalmanak 79 (1961); J. Poortman, "Steven Coerts. Een Drents landverhuizer uit 1660", Nieuwe Drentse Volksalmanak 61 (1943).

2) New York Municipal Archives, Town Records of Flatbush, Liber B, f.39.

3) Ibidem, f.108

4) J. Bieleman, Boeren op het Drentse zand 1600-1910 (Wageningen, 1987) 64. 5) Ottho Keye, het waere Onderscheyt tusschen koude en warme landen(. .) (1659), 15.

6) Peter R. and Florence A. Christoph eds., The Andros Papers, 1674-1676. New York historical manuscripts series XXIV-XXV (Syracuse, N.Y., 1989) 506.

7) E. B. O'Callaghan ed., Documentary history of the state of New York (Albany, 1849-1851) II, 299-289.

Section III

EMIGRATION FROM DRENTHE TO AMERICA
In the Seventeenth Century

BY J. FOLKERTS

This section is an article written by Drs. Jan Folkerts that combines many of his professional interests: archival research on the dwellers of Drenthe and vicinity, Dutch settlement patterns in the New Netherlands, group emigration circumstances, and agriculture in the 17th century Dutch New York. Weaving these themes into the genealogical research on the Van Voorhees Family in both Holland and America carried out with D. J. Wijmer (See Section I), he enlightens us as to what happened and probably why.

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Introduction

During the 1840s the United States attracted many emigrants from the province of Drenthe in the Netherlands. The major part of these emigrants left for religious reasons. After they had separated themselves from the Reformed church in many parts of the country, they increasingly considered themselves to be a persecuted minority. Guided by their ministers, they left for the New World and started a new life in the state of Michigan. This 'Van Raalte-trek' has been well documented.[1]

Less well known is that already around 1660 a group migration of modest size had taken place to America. In the middle of the seventeenth century about 100 people from Drenthe moved to the colony of New Netherland.[2] Most of these people left in two groups, one of which came in April 1660 on the Spotted Cow and the other in April 1662 on the Hope. The majority of the Drenthe emigrants originated in the southwest of the province, specifically in Meppel and the environs of Ruinen. In this article we will examine the nature and the size of this emigration in more detail.

According to a recent—very conservative—estimate, the total number of emigrants from the Dutch Republic to New Netherland, between 1624 and 1664, was less than 6000 people. [3] Compared to the emigration to New England and Virginia this is certainly not an impressive figure. The small number of Dutch emigrants to America is even more noteworthy when we realize that the cultural and political influence of this ethnic group continued long after the colony became an English possession in 1664. In important areas of the states of New York and New Jersey, Dutch was spoken as late as the previous century. Even in the beginning of this century one could occasionally encounter people who spoke the so-called Jersey Dutch.[4] Three American presidents could trace their ancestry back to New Netherland emigrants: Martin vanBuren (1837- 1841), Theodore Roosevelt (1901–1909) and his distant relative Franklin D. Roosevelt (1933–1945).

Among American historians the Dutch role in the early history of North America received renewed attention during the last twenty years.[5] About emigration from the Dutch Republic itselt, however, very little has been published.[6] Interest in emigration from Drenthe to America came about rather late. This was also true for Dutch emigration in general. Although there is insufficient evidence to permit an accurate reconstruction of the emigration to New Netherland, it seems likely that there were as many emigrants in the period between 1656 and 1664 as in the entire prior period.

Before this time New Netherland had encountered many set backs. From its early days the colony had been torn apart by internal divisions.

Until 1639 the West India Company pursued a two-sided strategy because of lack of agreement within the company about what to do with the American colony. One group of big stockholders, under the leadership of Amsterdam jeweler Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, advocated making New Netherland into a permanent settlement as an agricultural colony. This group planned to turn New Netherland into a grain silo for the other American possessions of the West India Company such as Brazil, Curacao, Surinam, Essequibo and Demerary.

The Van Rensselaer faction encountered resistance from a group which saw New Netherland largely as the provider of the popular beaver pelts, which were bought in large quantities from the Indians. The monopoly in this trade had been for a long time in the hands of the West India Company until the States-General forced a change of course in the year 1639. The Hague had witnessed with considerable displeasure how, after a successful start in 1624, emigration had come to a near standstill in only a few years and how the fast growing English settlements to the North and South formed an increasing threat to the Dutch territory.

After 1639 every colonist was allowed to trade in fur for a small fee and farmers who wanted to emigrate to the colonies with their families could acquire cheap land under favorable conditions. They were also entitled to an advance from the Company for the passage. This change of course by the Company had its intended effect. For the first time, emigration to the colony really took off. New settlements were established in several locations around the capital of New Amsterdam and, in only a few years, the population doubled. But already by 1644 New Netherland was back where it had started. A destructive war with the Indians, near the delta of the Hudson river, destroyed nearly all the farms outside New Amsterdam and the inhabitants of the new settlements fled in panic back to this small town. It took a long time before New Netherland recovered from this set back. Just when the settlers recovered, another conflict with the Indians broke out in 1655, the so called Peach War. Only thereafter could those in the largest part of the colony dedicate themselves to the reconstruction and expansion of the settlement area with the exception of the area around Wiltwijck (now Kingston) where for three years (1660–1663) there was continued fighting with the Esopus Indians.

By the end of the Dutch period, New Netherland was a colony of about 15 villages and some hamlets which would rapidly grow into villages. Far to the south, near the Delaware river, was located the "city colony" New Amstel, which had been sold by the West India Company to the city of Amsterdam. Hundreds of miles to the north, on the island of Manhattan, lay

the capital, New Amsterdam, with an estimated population of 1500 inhabitants. To the north of New Amsterdam, also on Manhattan, lay another village, New Haarlem, currently the New York City section called Harlem. On the western tip of Long Island were ten villages. Five of these were predominantly inhabited by English colonists who had left Connecticut. The five Dutch Villages were New Amersfoort, Midwout, New Utrecht, Breuckelen (now Brooklyn) and Boswijck.

On the other side of the Hudson river, in the current state of New Jersey, lay the village of Bergen, which was founded in 1661. Some 250 kilometers to the North lay the second city of the colony, Beverwijck, now known as Albany. Beverwijck functioned as the centre of the fur trade with the Indians of the powerful Iroquois League, who lived in the area between the Great Lakes and the up-river section of the Hudson. Beverwijck was surrounded by the agricultural colony Rensselaerswijck which was founded in 1630 by Kiliaen van Rensselaer. The town of Schenectady was founded in the year 1661 in the valley of the Mohawk River, a branch of the Hudson river. Schenectady was the most isolated settlement of the colony. Halfway up the Hudson, in an area called Esopus, lay two villages, one of which was Wiltwijck.

From this brief geographical description of the territory it is readily apparent that the settlement area did not form a complete whole. This may have been one of the factors leading to the more or less peaceful takeover by the English in 1664. Only during the last year of the Dutch period there was a meeting in New Amsterdam of the representatives of all the villages to discuss the critical military situation of the colony. At that point, it had been clear for some time that the Dutch were not capable of mounting resistance to the increasing pressure from the English colonists in New England.

In spite of the gloomy long-term outlook, the situation in New Netherland was a lot rosier around the year 1660 than it had been ten years before. This was not in the least due to the powerful influence of Pieter Stuyvesant, who served as Director General from 1647 to 1664. Every year hundreds of new colonists arrived among whom were an increasing number of farmers with their families. During this period also most of the emigrants from the province of Drenthe arrived in their new fatherland. Before dealing with the group emigration around 1660 I want to discuss the first Drenthe colonists in the New World.

Before this, for American readers some general information on Drenthe might be interesting. Drenthe in the seventeenth century was by far the most thinly populated area of the Dutch Republic. With a population of about 22000

inhabitants on 2600 square kilometers, the almost total absence of towns (with the notable exception of Meppel and Coevorden) and huge marshes on its frontiers, it was almost neglected by its seven sister republics. In fact, its little political and economic weight was so evident, that Drenthe by the other members of the Dutch federation could be denied its seats in the States-General. However, in internal affairs Drenthe was self-governing like every other province, and its judicial and political institutions were very old and revered (like for instance the 'Etstoel', the highest court in Drenthe, consisting of four members ('etten') from every district, totalling.[24] These districts were the old 'dingspelen', each consisting of a number of 'kerspelen' (parishes). Despite its unimportance, Drenthe had to pay its share in the federal debts. This share was fixed at 1%. Although there is a seemingly deep-rooted historical tradition that Drenthe was during the ancient regime isolated and economically backward, recent research has discovered that there were many economic contacts with the rest of the Republic and that Drenthe played its role in the national and international market system of agricultural products. Drenthe also served as an important producer of peat, that for a large part was exported via Meppel to the thriving towns of the west. The most densely populated area of Drenthe was the southwest. But even there, there were only 4 people per square kilometer. In 1630, Ruinen had about 590 inhabitants, Ruinerwold 860, Meppel 1200.

The First Colonists from Drenthe in New Netherland.

As well as can be ascertained, the first person from Drenthe to set foot on American soil was a ship's captain[7], the skipper of the ship the Seven Stars (Sevenster), Jan Claessen from Meppel. On June 20, 1642 he appeared before the court of the colony, having been accused of slander.[8] He had apparently slandered Cornelis van der Hoykens. The matter dragged on, for two months later, on August 28, Jan van Meppel appeared to testify that Van der Hoykens had started the verbal exchange which led to the name calling.[9] On the same day the gunner of the Seven Stars received a penalty of five guilders because he had beaten his skipper.[10]

By mid-October the Seven Stars was still in New Amsterdam, for on the seventeenth of the month a certain Jannitje Mertens testified before the court that Jan van Meppel had promised to marry her and under that condition had had "carnal conversation" with her. She had heard from others, however, that Jan Claessen had deceived her. The skipper asked her whether she attached more credibility to gossip than his word.[11] By the beginning of November the matter had been settled to the satisfaction of

both parties, when Jannitje received a quarantee that the children from her first marriage would receive fl. 20,—each upon reaching adulthood. Jan van Meppel quaranteed the amount.[12] The two were to be married in Curacao as soon as the Seven Stars arrived.[13] Because Jan Claessen van Meppel was in Stuyvesant's company at the island of Curacao in March 1643, along with his yacht the Seven Stars[14], we have no reason to believe that the couple settled in New Netherland. In the beginning of 1644, Van Meppel served with Stuyvesant on a military expedition against the Spanish occupying forces on the island of St. Martin, resulting in the recovery of this island by the Dutch.[15] It is plausible that Jan Claessen passed along information about the colony to the people of Meppel, considering the significant number of colonists from that city in later times.

The first documented permanent settler from Drenthe in New Netherland was the tailor Jacob Gerritsen Strycker from Ruinen. He appeared in Amsterdam, on December 28, 1651, before the notary J. de Winter to take into his service an apprentice tailor, his 21 year old cousin Jacob Gerrits, from his place of birth in Drenthe. This servant signed a contract to serve Strycker in New Amsterdam for three years for free room and board, a wage of 100 guilders a year and 9 stivers of drink money each week.[16]

Jacob Gerritsen Strycker probably emigrated with several relatives all at once, for around 1652 several family members of the tailor appear in the New Netherland references. His brother Jan Strycker, reported later as a gunsmith, had left for America accompanied by his wife and six children.[17] We encounter his name for the first time in the year 1652. We also find in the references a sister of Jacob and Jan, Angenietje.[18] Jan Strycker was married to Lammertje Seuberingh, probably from Zwiggelte. He was one of the founders of the village of Midwout on Long Island, where he often functioned as elder, church deacon and sheriff. According to a tax roll from 1675 he was the second richest inhabitant of this village. He owned a farm with four horses, 22 cows and around 60 acres land.[20] Jan Strycker was one of the signers of the well known 'Remonstrantie' of 1653 in which a number of important citizens of New Netherland issue demands, one of which was for more influence over the conduct of the colony.[21]

Also in or about 1652 from Drenthe arrived the large family of Jan Martense (van Alstyn), who, judging from the adopted surname in the colony, apparently did not originally come from Drenthe. This family replaced its hometown Meppel for the thriving little sea-port of New Amsterdam. [22]

In September 1654 appeared on the coast of New Amsterdam the French frigate St. Charles. The ship was packed with refugees from Brazil. Earlier that year the last remaining Dutch bulwark, Recief, had surrendered

to the Portuguese attackers and thus ending the short-lived dream of a Dutch South Atlantic empire after the forts in Angola had surrendered to the Portuguese earlier.[23]

Among the Brazilian refugees aboard the St. Charles was the minister Johannes Theodorus Polhemius, who had been a minister for sixteen years in Brazil.[24] He used to own a sugar plantation on the island Itamarca.[25] Polhemius came originally from the Paltz, but for this story he is important because he had served in two parishes in Drenthe in the period from 1624 to 1634. He had begun his ministerial service in Gieten and after 1627 served the religious community in Meppel, where he had also been the rector of the Latin school.[26] The civil authorities of New Amsterdam as well as the ministers of the town, Megapolensis and Drisius, exerted considerable pressure on him to stay in New Netherland.[27] This made him the first minister of the three communities on Long Island, Midwout, New Amersfoort and Breuckelen. He died in 1676.[28]

In Midwout settled also a certain Pieter Lott from Ruinerwold. This Drent was referred to in 1656 as deacon of the community, in addition to Jan Strycker.[29] If one added a minister who was very familiar with Drenthe it should be no surprise that the emigrants from Drenthe who moved to this region of New Netherland a few years later must have felt rather at home.

In 1657 another journeyman tailor appeared before a notary in Amsterdam, on his way to New Netherland. He was Hendrick Jans Rooseboom from Dinxterveen, in the border area between Overijssel and Drenthe to the north of Meppel. Rooseboom was to live for three years in Fort Orange (Beverwijck) in the service of a certain Jan Hendricksz van Bael. In addition to free room and board and drink he was to earn fl.149,- a year and the return trip home would be free.[30] Rooseboom was never to use the latter option. He must have done rather well in Beverwijck since at a later date he owned a house close to where the Indians entered the city to sell beaver pelts during the trading season. The journeyman tailor became a reader, sexton and trader in this rough settlement at the edge of the wilderness. He also farmed the slaughter excise for a number of a years in a row.[31] His son Johannes went on to establish a reputation as one of the great traders. In the year 1685 he was the leader of an expedition that made a trip to Lake Huron with ten canoes. He succeeded in doing profitable trade with the local Indians. The French colonists in Canada were terribly threatened by this adventure since they had assumed to have exclusive trade with these western Indians.[32] Encouraged by the success of this trade expedition Rooseboom organized another trip on a larger scale during the following year. In the fall of 1686 he departed on the second expedition, this time with

twenty canoes and fifty men, primarily Dutch from the Hudson Valley. They established winter quarters with the Seneca Indians so that they could travel to the Western Lakes during the Spring. The French, who saw their lucrative trade with the Indians being destroyed immediately, panicked. They mounted a counter expedition from Canada and took Rooseboom and his men prisoner on Lake Hudson and transported them to Montreal.[33]

In the year following the arrival of Hendrick Jans Rooseboom, another emigrant from the same area arrived in Beverwijck, Jan Jans Bleecker, who came from Meppel. This seventeen-year old emigrant had originally been a blacksmith, but turned in this little town into a wealthy merchant, who served from 1698 to 1700 as a member of the Provincial Assembly and from 1700 to 1701 as mayor of Albany.[34] One of his descendants was Harmannus Bleecker, who when travelling as a tourist to the Netherlands in 1838, was appointed United States ambassador to the Netherlands by President Martin van Buren. Bleecker was one of the founders of the renewed interest in New Netherland history, which attracted the attention of the Dutch New Yorkers at this time. The main public library of Albany is named after him.[35]

Another early emigrant from Meppel was the butcher Roelof Jansen, who owned land in 1656 in Mespath on Long Island.[36] Jansen lived however in New Amsterdam, where he owned a house on the Beversgracht.[37] In October 1665 he was appointed by the new government along with seven others to the role of "sworn butcher". For slaughtering an ox or a cow he was to receive fl. 6.00.[38]

The peak of the emigration from Drenthe to North America was reached in the years 1659 to 1662. In this brief period more than seventy people departed for New Netherland, as far as can be ascertained, all from the southwest of the province. In 1659 the carpenter Roelof Hendricks left Meppel accompanied by his sisters Femmetje and Hilletje for the then by Indians devastated Wiltwijck, halfway up the Hudson river.[39] All three married within a few years, Hilletje even to someone from a town not too far from Meppel, the tailor Albert Jansen who came from Steenwijk.[40] During the Esopus Wars Femmetje, who had been married only a few months, was taken prisoner by the Indians along with seven other women and 26 children. After three months of imprisonment in the wilderness she was liberated, presumably at the same time as 21 others, by an expedition led by Lieutenant Cregier.[41]

Group Emigration

During the years 1660 and 1662, emigration from southwest Drenthe had grown sufficiently large to justify calling it group emigration. On April

15, 1660, 58 people departed for the New World on board the ship the Spotted Cow, among whom were 39 emigrants from Drenthe. This was the largest group to depart from this region for America until the nineteenth century. The passenger list describes the origin of nearly all 39 only as "from Drenthe". We have therefore relied on other sources for more information about the origins of these people.

From Ruinen came the two large farm families of Focke Jans and Steven Coerts, each accompanied by his wife and seven children. In addition there were two farm hands and two maids, the cobbler Pieter Jansen with his wife and four children from Ruinerwold, [42] the wheelwright Claes Arentsen with his wife, three children and a servant,[43] and finally some colonists about whom little is known, such as a certain Jan Souvanich from Beilen, possibly the same person as Jan Seuberingh from Zwiggelte.[44] Among the passengers was also Jan Kiers who was married to Hendrikje Stevens, a daughter of Steven Coerts from Ruinen.[45] Although Poortman wrote a complete novel about the life of Steven Coerts in Drenthe and America,[46] little is actually known about the real life of this farmer from Ruinen. His children gave themselves in America the name "Van Voorhees", after a tenant farm of the former abbey of Dikninge under Ruinen, although Steven Coerts had been renting the nearby Pol's erve since 1655, which also was part of the abbey of Dikninge.[47] The Pol's erve was a small farm (hoeve) with 17 and 1/2 'mud' farmland and 7 and 1/2 'dagwerk' hayland (altogether nearly 10 hectare), for which he had to pay annually 28 'mud' rye to the landlord. On Voorhees and Achterhees lived his brothers Albert Coerts and Hilbert Coerts. The tenant farms of Hees had been rented for a number of generations by this family. Steven Coerts was probably the youngest brother, who for that reason had probably not been able to obtain a lease on one of the Hees farms, but had been forced to settle for a smaller farm instead. Before Steven Coerts moved to the Pol's erve, he owned a tiny farm with 3 and 1/2 'mud' farmland in Ruinen, which during the land tax assessment of 1646 was assessed at fl. 1.285.[49]

On April 15, 1660 Steven Coerts and his family set sail for America. On February 2, 1660 we can still find him mentioned in the appendix of the landlord accounts. On that date Hendrick Berents, the schoolmaster of Ruinen, signed a receipt for three 'mud' rye, which Steven Coerts had delivered on behalf of the landlord of Dikninge.[50] Six months after his arrival in New Netherland Steven Coerts bought in the village of New Amersfoort, where Polhemius was minister, a farm from Cornelis Dircksen Hooglant for the sum of fl. 3.400. This was a remarkably high figure for a farmer, who had lived in Drenthe only on "half a place"! It is possible that Steven Coerts

spent his share of the family inheritance on the farm in New Netherland. That the family was not poor is shown by the quantity and quality of the holdings leased in Hees, but also from the amount of their "own money" that they had invested in the farms. In 1642 Voorhees was assessed at fl. 10.000 and Achterhees at more than fl. 11.000. Both holdings owned a whole share in Commons. These shares were worth 4.000 guilders each, indicating that the open field in this area alone was very valuable. The farmland belonging to Ruinen was assessed at fl. 154 a 'mud' making this clearly some of the best land in Drenthe.[51] In 1630 the Coerts family had invested altogether nearly 6.000 guilders of their own money in the three Hees holdings combined.[52]

The farm purchased by Steven Coerts in New Amersfoort consisted of 55 'morgen' land, about 110 acres.[53] This was five times the size of the land he had rented in Ruinen. His son-in-law Jan Kiers also settled in New Amersfoort.

Focke Jans, who used to live in the same village as Steven Coerts and who had also made passage on the Spotted Cow, lived in Ruinen on a little farm which was assessed in the land tax assessment at only fl. 737.[54] Unlike Coerts he did not move to Long Island, but settled in the "Bowery" instead, a small farming community that had been established close to the north of New Amsterdam around the summer residence of director general Pieter Stuyvesant. He appeared occasionally before the court in New Amsterdam where he presented a number of charges. On November 1, 1661 he appeared to demand money from three people because they had not paid their bill for food and drink.[55] One of the three defendants explained that all three together with Focke Jans had been drinking continously for three days and three nights and that he was prepared to make payments only if the others paid their fair share.[56] In 1665 Fochke Jans was declared exempt from the beer tax. Due to the bad condition of the road a lot of beer leaked from the barrels during transport from the city to the Bowery. Because he incurred considerable expense carting the beer with his own wagon he was declared exempt from the tax.[57] Whether there is any connection to the court appearance described earlier is not mentioned in the references, but on April 7, 1668 he was appointed as a member of the "overseers of Fences and Highways".[58] He died before August 5, 1671.[59]

Another native of Drenthe who lived on the Bowery, in addition to Focke Jans, was Kier Wolters who came from Anholt (between Ruinen and Pesse).[60] On November 17, 1661, Kier had embarked with his wife and six children aboard the Purmerland Church (Purmerlander Kerck), which was to take the emigrants to the South River (Delaware).[61] I have not been able

to find any evidence of Wolters' presence in that territory. He is definitely accounted for on October 25, 1664 in New Amsterdam, living on the Bowery.[62] According to Rider, Wolters was before 1667 in charge of Stuyvesant's farm in the Bowery. He came to Harlem in the fall of 1667, and moved to the nearby village of Fordham after which he died. (notes: James Riker, Revised History of Harlem, 263). He died in 1669 or in 1670.[63]

Just one emigrant from Drenthe can be positively identified at the Delaware in New Netherland. This was the barber-surgeon Jan Oosting [64] from Meppel, who died in New Amstel as a result of a severe epidemic, raging on the South River in the summer of 1658. Oosting died between August 16, 1658—the date of his will[65] —and 5 September, when he is referred to as having died recently in a letter of Jacob Alrichs to Pieter Stuyvesant.[66]

Aboard the De Hoop (The Hope), that departed in April 1662 for New Netherland, were 23 people from Drenthe, all hailing from Meppel. On this ship travelled William Lubbertsen and Lubbert Lubbertsen and their families, referred to in the passengers list as farmers. Whether they really were farmers is questionable: William Lubberts is mentioned in the land tax assessment of 1646 as a weaver. In a membership list of 1652 the two are entered in the book as living in Meppel "along the water's edge" and "under the Stone bridge" (onder de Steenenbrugge).[67] Although the Hope had already left for America in April 1662, the church register of Meppel still contained an entry for the two men on May 19, 1662 with the notation 'to New Netherland'.[68] Both settled in New Amsterdam.[69]

Over the years a number of emigrants from Drenthe departed for New Netherland of whom the departure dates are unknown; for instance, one of them was Jan Roelofs Elting, who came from Zwiggelte under Beilen. Elting probably arrived in New Netherland on or before 1663, when he purchased a farm at Midwout (Note: New York Municipal Archives Midwout Town Records, Liber B, f.150) Later Elting settled in Wiltwijck..[70] He was involved in an interesting case which illustrates how large the distance between Drenthe and America really was in the seventeenth century. About 1677 died in Zwiggelte the father of Jan Roelfs Elting, Roelof Elting. From the land tax assessment of 1654 we know that the latter owned a substantial farm of 27 'mud' farm land, which was then assessed at fl. 5.805.[71] Jan Kiers from New Amersfoort, who was mentioned earlier in this article, was given authorization to travel to the Netherlands to claim Elting's share of the inheritance. After arriving in the fatherland, Kiers on September 5, 1678 had a declaration prepared in Amsterdam, in which Paulus Cornelis van Baambrugge and Jan Teunis van Dijckhuizen stated that they had lived in Wiltwijck in New Netherland for some time and that they both knew Jan

Elting well. They both had left America on the 13th of May 1678 and knew Elting to have been healthy at that time.[72]

On November 12, 1678 the case appeared before the Etstoel in Rolde. The attorney representing Jan Kiers demanded on behalf of Jan Elting 'separation and partitioning' of the property, but the defendant, a brother-in-law of Jan Elting, swore by high and by low that Jan Elting had been dead for a few years. The evidence that Jan Kiers had brought with him was judged to be inadequate and Drost and 24 'etten' decided that Jan Elting himself would have to appear in person.[73] Jan Elting, probably dumbfounded when he heard the news, prepared for his departure in the fall of 1679 so that he could plead his case in person in the Dutch Republic, On September 30 he witnessed his last will and testament in Kingston (Wintwijck).[74] Next he went to New Amersfoort, the village on Long Island where so many of his regional compatriots had settled. There he had the following declaration prepared:

'On this date, October 10 in the year 1679 appeared before us Captain James Hubbard, Elbert Elbertsen Stoothoff and Jacques Corteljau, on behalf of Jan Elten, inhabitant of Kingston, waiting for his departure from here to Patria, the honorable Steven Coerten, 79 years old, Willem Roelofs, 60 years old, Jan Strijcker Roeremaker, 64 years old, Jan Subringh, 48 years old, Coert Stevensen, 42 years old; All are born in the Land of Drenthe; These declare, truthfully and verily, that the earlier named Requirant is the legal heir of Roeloff Elten and his wife Aeltjen Elten in the Village Swigtel in the Land of Drenthen'.[75]

Three months later Jan Elting arrived in Drenthe. He paid a visit to Ruinen to deliver a letter from Coert Stevens of New Amersfoort to his relatives in Drenthe.[76] On January 20, 1680 minister Hofstede from Beilen signed an extract from the baptismal registers for Jan Elting.[77] Although Elting apparently came to plead his case in person in Drenthe, there is no record of this in the Etstoel archives. The family probably caved in quickly when Jan Elting appeared in the flesh before them and settled things peacefully.

Causes and Motives

It is not easy to get a clear picture of the causes of the seventeenth century emigration from the southwest of the province Drenthe. In general it is assumed that the increase in emigration after 1655—not only from Drenthe, but also from other areas in the Republic—could not only be attributed to the easier terms of emigration imposed by the West India Com-

pany, but also to the situation in the motherland. In the middle of the seventeenth century, in large areas of Europe, there was a major turning point in agricultural economic conditions.

Although this economic downturn has been documented in many sources,[78] little has been published about its effect on Drenthe. The tax burden definitely increased since the introduction of the land tax assessment of 1643. During the 1650s there were a number of consecutive years with low prices for rye.[79] These factors affected all of Drenthe and therefore do not explain why so many people just from the southwest departed for America.

Bieleman, in an analysis of the revenues of the head tax, suggests that the population in Dieverderdingspil and the 'heerlijkheid' Ruinen decreased considerably after 1645, in contrast to the rest of Drenthe.[80] J. A. Verduin concludes, on the basis of demographic research, that there was excess migration from the sand area in Drenthe during the second half of the seventeenth century. He estimates the excess migration to be about 60 to 140 people in each year.[81] The farm families that left around 1660 from Ruinen and Zwiggelte for America fit this picture. In his recent dissertation on agriculture in Drenthe, Bieleman gives some data on the decrease of population in southwest Drenthe. More than anywhere else in Drenthe, there was a downfall in Ruinen and Ruinerwold between 1630 and 1672. In Ruinen the number of households in this time-span dropped from 110 to 87, in Ruinerwold from 168 to 134.[82]

A search of the archives of Drenthe for the immediate causes of individual emigration to America initially seemed a task not worth the effort. When perusing the appendix of the accounts of Dikninge, I accidentally came across two letters which may throw some light on the motives of one emigrant and his family. In 1661, Kier Wolters from the Anholt, who was mentioned earlier, submitted a petition to Drost and Deputies for remission of the back rent which he owed to Dikninge. From the latter he rented for three consecutive years two 'dagmaat' hayland. Because of his indebtedness he had not been able to make the payments. Drost and Deputies acted favorably on his request on June 29, 1661. On October 7, 1661, the provincial government, acting as legal heir of the abbey of Dikninge, permanently remitted his back rent.[83] Within less than six weeks he appeared with his entire family on the roadstead of Texel in a ship on its way to America. It would seem reasonable to attribute his departure to an economic motive.

It is possible that the first pioneers from Drenthe in America like the Stryckers from Ruinen, suggested to their former friends and neighbors that they exchange the old Landschap for the New World. From the experiences

of the different emigrants from Drenthe in the New World it appears that our colony presented unforeseen opportunities for tenant farmers, small independent farmers and even for farm hands. The farmers who left with their families for America undoubtedly also had an eye on the future of their children. The proverbial abundance of land must have exerted a strong influence on emigrants from Drenthe who were used to a precarious balance between the number of farms, their size and the bracken land. Coert Stevens, the oldest son of Steve Coerts of Ruinen, owned in 1675 in New Amersfoort a farm of about 88 acres, while his father also owned a farm of his own. Coert's brother-in-law, Jan Kiers, owned a farm of 62 acres. Coert Stevens owned a Long Island farm that would have been called in Drenthe a "full" farm, with four horses and seventeen cows. In later years the large farms of Coert and his brothers were also being exploited with the help of black slaves. In 1698 Coert Stevens owned two slaves; his brother Lucas four.[84] The Pater Familias himself, Steven Coerts, was already sixty years old when he arrived in New Netherland,[85] which shows again that the future of his children must have played a key role in his decision to emigrate.

The family members who had been left behind were amazed at the standard of living achieved by their overseas relatives. A letter of 1687 from Hilbert Coerts of Ruinen to his cousin Steven Coerts in New Amersfoort is clear on this topic—even if the Dutch is awkward:

"I am surprised how Jan Cyers (he means Jan Kiers, brother- in-law of Coert Stevens) has gained so much in this period, since he was an extravagant brother. We are very much surprised and it cannot be but a very good country there".[86]

He comments elsewhere in his letter that New Netherland offers great potential for any farmer with fl. 2.000 of his own money. Whoever reads this letter gets the impression that the stream of emigrants from Drenthe to New Netherland might have been considerably larger had the English not taken over the colony in 1664.

The high wages in New Netherland were very attractive to the farmhands from Drenthe.[87] Meyndert Henrixss of Meppel, who signed a contact in March 1663 to work for four years for a farmer on Long Island, was to earn fl. 100,- during the first year, fl. 110- in the second, fl. 120,- during the third and fl. 159,- during the last year.[88] Frederic Claes van Westenesch (near Emmen) went as farmhand to the Esopus for fl. 130,- a year. Roelof Gerrits of Meppel received from the same employer fl. 50,- for the first three years and fl. 60,- for the last year.[89] He was probably considerably younger than Van Westenesch.

In addition to economic motives, the family relations between the emigrants from Drenthe played an important role in the emigration. This is particularly the case for the farmers' families from Ruinen and Zwiggelte. The correspondence between Drenthe and American family members of the family van Voorhees from Ruinen, mentioned earlier, is all the more evidence of strong family ties between the emigrants from Drenthe. Although it was often difficult to maintain contact, family members continued to correspond for nearly forty years after Steven Coerts' departure.

The available evidence so far uncovered from the Drenthe archives strongly suggest that the type of emigration to New Netherland is similar to emigration patterns that have been established in research into the nineteenth century emigration from the Netherlands to the United States.[90] This chain emigration in which people from certain villages were attracted to the United States by relatives that already paved the way for them is very likely to have occurred also in the seventeenth century, especially in the last two decades of New Netherland's fragile existence.

As we saw earlier, the brothers Strycker from Ruinen were among the first known emigrants from Drenthe. Jan Strycker was married to a certain Lammettje Seuberingh. Recent genealogical research has been able to establish that she was the sister-in- law of Steven Coerts, who had been married to Willemtje Roelofs Seuberingh. There was another colonist from Drenthe living in New Amersfoort by the name of Jan Roelofs Seuberingh. It cannot be determined with certainty where these three Seuberinghs originated. It is a fact, however, that Jan Roelofs Eltingh emigrated from Zwiggelte under Beilen. It is also a fact that in the same village there were in 1654 two Seubring farmsteads, which makes it very likely that Jan Roelofs Seubringh was a son of Roelof Seubringh, who in 1654 owned a farmstead with 22 mud farmland in Zwiggelte. Willemtje and Lammertje were probably his sisters.

There is still no satisfactory answer to the question why just in 1660 and 1662 there were two groups of emigrants that left Drenthe for America, and why these emigrants originated just from Ruinen and Meppel. We need more information about seventeenth century migration patterns from the Netherlands to the colonies and also about migration within the Dutch Republic. This is an exciting and scarcely investigated territory for historians with a demographic interest.

Extensive genealogical and historical research is required to establish the actual relationship between most of the emigrants from Drenthe. In contrast to the often fragmented way genealogical research is currently conducted, a great opportunity lies in a coordinated effort to reveal family

ties and motives for emigration of this interesting group of early Dutch settlers in North America. Such an effort, backed and sponsored by important American organizations wih an interest in the Dutch heritage, would undoubtedly save a lot of time and money and would be very advantageous to the quality of this research.

Footnotes

1. The most important reference is H.J. Prakke, *Drenthe in Michigan.* Assen, 1974. For Dutch emigration from 1846 to 1847 see P.R.D. Stokvis, *De Nederlandse trek naar Amerika 1846-1847* (Dutch migration to America.) Leiden, 1977.

2. The number has been rounded from the actual number of Drenthe emigrants found in the historical references, actually 111. An extensive study of reference material also relying on archives in the United States would undoubtedly uncover even more American emigrants from Drenthe. The nature and the size of the reference material on which I have relied leads me to assume that the large majority of emigrants has been found.

3. E. van den Boogaart "The servant migration to New Netherland, 1624-1664" in: E. van den Boogaart, P.C. Emmer (eds.), *Colonialism and Migrations: indentured labour before and after slavery.* Dordrecht, Boston, Lancaster, 1986, 61.

4. Regarding the disappearance of the use of Dutch in New York state I refer to the unpublished dissertation of Ch. Gehring, *The Dutch language in colonial New York: an investigation of a language in decline and its relationship to social change.* Bloomington, Indiana University, 1973, or L. G. van Loon, *Crumbs from an old Dutch closet. The Dutch dialect of old New York.* The Hague, 1938.

5. Some important works testifying to the renewed interest are Van Cleaf Bachman, *Peltries or Plantations, The economic policy of the Dutch West India Company 1623-1639.* Baltimore, 1969; Th. J. Condon, *New York beginnings; the commercial origins of New Netherland,* New York, 1968, and A.P. Kenney, *Stubborn for Liberty, The Dutch in New York,* Syracuse, 1975. Recently was published an important contribution to the economic history of the area O.Rink, *Holland on the Hudson, An economic and social history of early New York.* Ithaca and London, 1986.

6. A summary overview is provided by B.H.Wabeke, *Dutch emigration to North America.* Freeport, 1970.

7. According to some authors, Joris Dircksen Brinckerhoff, arriving in New Netherland in 1638, was born in Drenthe. G.O. Zabriskie demonstrated, however, in 1970 that Brinckerhoff was born in Vorden (Gelderland). *Yearbook of the Holland Society of New York* (1915) Bergen Book III, 20; G.O.Zabriskie. "The Brinckeroff-Brinkerhoff family" in: *De Halve Maen* 45 (1970) no. 1, 9-12. *New York Historical Manuscripts:* Dutch (hereafter *NYHM*) ed. A.J.F. van Laer, 4 volumes (Baltimore 1970) I, 349,350; E.B. O'Callaghan, *History of New Netherland or New York under the Dutch.* 2 volumes (New York, 1848) II,582.

8. *NYHM* IV: 150.

9. Ibid: 157.

10. Ibid.

11. *NYHM* IV: 167.

12. *NYHM* II: 83, 84.

13. *NYHM* IV: 167.

14. eds. C.T. Gehring, J.A. Schilthamp *New Netherland Documents, vol.XVII. Curacao Papers, 1640-1665,* Interlaken, N.Y., 1987, 254-255.

15. Ibidem, 272.

16. *Ship passenger lists. New York and New Jersey (1600-1625),* Carl Boyer (ed.). New Hall, CA, 1978: 104, 105.

17. I would like to thank Mr. J. Strijker of Eelde providing the additional details regarding his distant American relatives and their ancestor Jan Strycker of Ruinen. From him I also received a copy of the unpublished manuscript of H.W. English, Descent of Mrs. Charlotte Johnson, through her mother, Mrs Eliza Strycker English, from Jan Strycker (report for D.A.R. membership) (s.l. 1912). According to Mr. Strijker the portrait of Jan Strycker was on display in the "Stryker House" in Flatbush, Long Island. The portrait is now in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. According however to R.E.O. Ekkart in his recent article "Vroege portretkunst in Nieuw-Nederland" (Early portrait-painting in New Netherland) it is absolutely uncertain that the painting supposedly depicting Jan Strycker, really shows us the portrait of this man. The whole story apparently goes back to a family tradition that was written down not before the late nineteenth century. R.E.O. Ekkart "Vroege Portretkunst in Nieuw-Nederland" in: *Jaarboek Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie* 36(1982)170-171.

18. *Ship passenger lists*, 11: 104, 105.

20. ad. Peter R Cristoph, Florence A. Cristoph, *The Andros Papers, 1674-1676. New York Historical Manuscripts series* Vols. XXIV-XXV, Syracuse, 1939.

21. *Documents relative to the colonial history of New York* (hereafter referred to by *NYCD*) 15 volumes, E.B. O'Callaghan (ed.)Albany 1856-1887, Vol. II: 577, 702, 375; Vol. XIV: 231, 310, 314, 344, 482, 52(?)

(information regarding Jan Strycker). Just before the English takeover in 1664 the inhabitants of the Dutch villages on Long Island appointed three people to represent the case of New Netherland (especially the critical military situation) in the Republic. One of the three was Jan Strycker; the commission never did visit the Netherlands.

22. For this family, I unfortunately have to rely completely on American genealogies, esp. L. van Alstine *Van Alstyne-Van Alstine family history*, Vol. 1, Provo,Utah, 1974.

23. C.R. Boxer, *De Nederlanders in Brizilie, 1624-1654,* Alphen aan de Rijn, 1977: 286; E. van den Boogaart, "De Nederlandse expansie in het Atlantisch gebied

(The Dutch expansion in the Atlantic region") *in:Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* (General History of the Netherlands). Haarlem, 1980, VII: 240.

24. E.T. Corwin, *A Manual of the Reformed Church in America, 1628-1878.* New York, 1879: 661, 662.

25. Ph. Van Wyck "Johannes Theodorus Polhemius", in *De Halve Maen* 55 (1980) No. 2: 12.

26. *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* (hereafter NYGBR) 70 (1959); 67, 72.

27. G. F. de Jong, "The Founding of the Dutch Reformed Church on Long Island", in *De Halve Maen* 54 (1979) No. 2: 1-3.

28. Van Wyck, "Johannes Theodorus Polhemius": 20.

29. *NYCD* XIV: 344.

30. Notarieel Archief, 2142/75 (Municipal archives of Amsterdam).

31. J. Pearson, Contributions for the genealogies of the first settlers of the ancient county of Albany, from 1630-1800. Albany, 1872: 92, 93.

32. T.E. Norton, *The fur trade in colonial New York, 1681-1776.* Madison, 1974: 153; H. Broshar, "First push westward of the Albany traders", in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 7 (1921); 233, 234.

33. Broshar: 234, 235. NYCD III: 395, 436-437, 476, 486-489.

34. Pearson, *Contributions*: 19.

35. A.P. Kenney, *Stubborn for Liberty. The Dutch in New York.* Syracuse, 1975: 237. See also the interesting article of C. A. van Minnen "Percepties van eev Amerikaans gezant: Harmannus Bleecker in Nederland (1839-1842)" *Americana* 1(1987)15-33.

36. NYCD XIV: 363, 364.

37. Records of New Amsterdam (RNA), B. Fernow (ed.), seven volumes, New York, 1902, V: 224.

38. *RNA* V: 312.

39. *Baptismal and marriage registers of the Old Dutch church of Kingston, Ulster Co., New York.* R.R. Hoes (ed.), Baltimore, 1980: 1, 4, 5.

40. *Ibid:* 500, 501.

41. *NYCD* XII: 246, 297, 339, 351.

42. The children of Pieter Jansen adopted the name Haughwaut (also Hagawout) in America. This has led to an erroneous conclusion that they originated in Hoogwoud in Westfriesland. Pieter Jansen was already identified as a cobbler in Blijdenstede(Ruinerwold). His son Leffert Pieterse was born in Dijkhuisen, also in Ruinerwold. Haughwaut is most likely a bastardization of Haakswold, which is also in the Ruinerwold district. In the passenger list is only listed "from Drenthe" but their origin from the Ruinerwold district seems to me hereby demonstrated. See also R.

F. Bailey, *Pre-revolutionary Dutch houses and families in northern New Jersey and southern New York,* New York, 1968: 135.

43. It is assumed that Claes Arentsen came from Norg on the basis of facts with which I am not familiar. See R. Schermerhorn Jr., "Representative pioneer settlers of New Netherland and their original home places", in *Immigrants to the middle colonies: a consolidation of ship passenger lists and associated data from the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record,* M. Tepper (ed.), Baltimore, 1978.

44. The name Souvanich is probably based on an error in the passenger list. There was no family with that name in Beilen around 1660.

45. According to correspondence published by Schaap, Kiers owned a house in Steenwijk. See the article by D. J. Wijmer in this volume.

46. J. Poortman, *Steven Coerts, De geschiedenis van een Ruiner familie in de zeventiende eeuw.* Meppel, 1983. Facts are provided by: J. Poortman in "Steven Coerts. Een Drents emigrant van 1660" in Nieuwe Drentse Volksalmanak 1943 (61): 29; *The Van Vorhees Family in the Netherlands and America,* New Brunswick, 1935, and E. W. van Voorhis, Notes on the ancestry of Major Wm. Roe van Voorhis, New York, 1881.

47. Rijksarchief Drenthe, Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778. Rentmeesterrekeningen from 1658.

49. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 845 (xeroxed copy): 94.

50. Oude Staten Archieven, Inv.no. 178. Rentmeesterrekeningen Dikninge from 1659.

51. P. Brood, *Grondschatting, omslagen en haarstedengeld*, Assen, 1980: 21.

52. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 841 (grondschatting 1636).

53. E. B. O'Callaghan (ed.), *Documentory history of the State of New York*, Albany, 1849-1851. Vol II 495-497. (Hereafter DHNY)

54. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 645 (xerox copy): 112.

55. *RNA* II: 397.

56. *RNA* II: 403.

57. *RNA* V: 253.

58. *RNA* VI: 123.The title suggests that English was the common language of New York by that time. This was not the case. The Records of New Amsterdam is a source translated from Dutch.

59. *RNA* VI, May 16/19: 1670.

60. For the history of the Anholt see F. H. Roobaard, "De Anholt", in *Ons Waardeel*, 1984 (4): 208-213.

61. *RNA* V: 300; *NYCD* II: 474.

62. *RNA* VI: 150.

63. *RNA* VI: 267.

64. Also Oostingh or Oosten.

65. Notarial Archives, 2288 II f.36,1660, Sept.2; and 2578, 1662, July 20. (Municipal Archives of Amsterdam).

66. ed. C.T. Gehring, *New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch, Delaware Papers, vol. XVIII-XIX,* Baltimore, 1981, 128.

67. Archives of the reformed congregation of Meppel, inv.no. 1.

68. Ibid.

69. *Baptism from 1639 to 1730 in the Reformed Dutch Church, New York, Collections of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, II.* New York, 1901: 78, 146.

70. In any case he lived in Wiltwijck (Esopus) at the time of his marriage in Bergen on November 24, 1672.

71. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 845 (xerox copy): 1301

72. Notarieel archief, 3787\145. (Municipal archives of Amsterdam).

73. Etstoel, inv.no. 14, Volumes 23: 279-281.

74. Jan Elting's situation has been described in P. R. Christoph, "Documents concerning Jan Eltinge's disputed patrimony: sources for biographical data on his family and friends", in *NYGBR* 1982: 193-197.

75. E. W. Van Voorhis, *Notes on the ancestry of Wm. Roe van Voorhis.* New York, 1891: 214-215.

76. Letter of 1684. H. P. Schaap, "De vier brieven", in *NDVA* 79 (1961): 125.

77. P.R. Christoph, "Documents", in *NYGBR* 1982 (see footnote 74).

78. See for instance B. H. Slicher van Bath, *De agrarische geschiedenis van West-Europa 500-1850* (The agricultural history of Western Europe 500-1850). Utrecht/Antwerpen, 1977: 229.

79. J. Bieleman, "De landbouw in the periode 1600-1850", (Agriculture in the period 1600-1850) in J. Heringa et. al. (eds.) *Geschiedenis van Drenthe* (history of Drenthe), Meppel, 1985: 352.

80. Ibid: 356.

81. J. A. Verduin, *Ontwikkeling van de Drentse bevolking gedurende the 17e en 18e eeuw* (Development of the Drenthe population during the 17th and 18th centuries). Assen, 1982 (Drenthe historical studies IV): 51.

82. J. Bieleman, *Boeren op het Drentse zand 1600-1910. Een nieuwe visie op de 'oude' landbouw.* Wageningen, 1987. p.64.

83. Oude Staten Archieven, inv.no. 1778, rentaeesterrekeningen Dikninge 1662, supplement.

84. *DHNY* III: 136.

85. See footnote 67.

86. Letter from 1687. H. P. Schaap, "De Vier Brieven", (The four letters), in *NDVA* 79, 1961, 125. See also Albert L. Stokes, *The Van Voorhees Family, Vol I, the first four generations,* 40 (S.I.1984). Due to a serious mistranslation the meaning of the words has not been recognized before. Stokes translates Superfluous as "kind of a prodigal spender".

87. The economy of New Netherland was prey to high inflation due to the unlimited import of wampum or zeewan. Wampum was made from sea shells and was an important means of payment in the trade with the Indians. The exchange rate of wampum and guilder was adjusted by the colonial administration in New Amsterdam several times, particularly during the last decades. Also in relation to local prices wages in New Netherland were higher than in the Republic. See my M. A. thesis *De pachters van Rensselaerswijck, 1630-1664. Nederlandse boeren in de wildernis van Noord-Amerika,* Groningen, 1984 (unpublished manuscript): 72-74.

88. Notarieel archief, 1638\42 (Municipal Archives of Amsterdam).

89. Notarieel archief 1368\41 (Municipal archives of Amsterdam).

90. A good synopsis of problems in the study of nineteenth century Dutch emigration to the United States is Robert P. Swierenga, "Het bestuderen van de Nederlandse emigratie naar de Verenigde Staten. Nieuwe methoden en begrippen." Jaarboek van het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie en het Iconographisch Bureau XXXVI (1982) 252-268.

Appendix

List of emigrants from the Dutch province of Drenthe to New Netherland. This list, which does not pretend to be complete, has been compiled from data in various printed and unprinted sources both in the Netherlands and the United States.

The large majority of the listed emigrants occur in the lists of WIC-supported passengers that left Amsterdam for America between 1655 and 1664. These lists have been printed in various places. The best edition is A. J. F. van Laer "Passengers to New Netherland", in: *Yearbook of the Holland Society of New York* (1902) 1-37.

The original lists are in the New York State Archives at Albany, NYCM, XIV, f.83-123

	Name	Year of departure	place of origin	first known place of settlement in N. Netherland
1	Jacob Gerritsen Strycker	:1651	Ruinen	N.Ad.
2	Jacob Gerritsen	:1651	Ruinen	N.Ad.
3	Jan Strycker x	:1652	Ruinen	Midwout
4	Lammertje Seuberingh	:1652	Ruinen	Midwout
5	Aaltje Strycker	:1652	Ruinen	Midwout
6	Jannetje Strycker	:1652	Ruinen	Midwout
7	Garrit Janse Strycker children of 3/4	:1652	Ruinen	Midwout
8	Angenietje Strycker	:1652	Ruinen	Midwout
9	a son, name unknown	:1652	Ruinen	Midwout
10	Eytie Strycker	:1652	Ruinen	Midwout
11	Angenietje Strycker (sr of 1 and 3)	:1656	Dwingelo	N.Ad.
12	Pieter Lott	:1652	Ruinerwold	Midwout
13	Roelof Jansen x	:1654	Meppel	N.Ad.
14	Geesje Claes	:1654	Meppel	N.Ad.
15	Johannes Theodorus Polhemius	:1654	Meppel	Midwout
16	Jan Jans Bleecker	:1658	Meppel	Beverwijck
17	Roelof Hendrikcks brother	:1659	Meppel	Wiltwijck
18	Femmetje Hendricks and	:1659	Meppel	Wiltwijck
19	Hilletje Hendricks sisters	:1659	Meppel	Wiltwijck
20	Coert Carstens	:1660	?	?
21	Gerrit Egberts	:1660	?	?

22	Cornelis Bartels	:1660	?	?
23	Jan Roelofs Seuberingh	:1659	Zwiggelte	N.Amersfoort
24	Albert Jans	:1660	?	?
25	Claes Arentsen x	:1660	? Norg	? Breuckel
26	wife, 3 children, servant	:1660	? Norg	? Breuckel
30				
31	Jan Kiers x	:1660	Ruinen	N.Amersfoort
32	Hindrickje Stevens	:1660	Ruinen	N.Amersfoort
33	Steven Coerts x	:1660	Ruinen	N.Amersfoort
34	Willemtje Roelofs Seuberingh	:1660	Ruinen	N.Amersfoort
35	Coert Stevens	:1660	Ruinen	N.Amersfoort
36	Jan Stevens	:1660	Ruinen	N.Amersfoort
37	Lucas Stevens	:1660	Ruinen	N.Amersfoort
38	Albert Stevens children	:1660	Ruinen	N.Amersfoort
39	Aeltje Stevens of 33/34	:1660	Ruinen	N.Amersfoort
40	Jannetje Stevens	:1660	Ruinen	N.Amersfoort
41	Hendrikje Stevens	:1660	Ruinen	N.Amersfoort
42	Focke Jans	:1660	Ruinen	Bouwerij
43	Grietie Hendric x	:1660	Ruinen	Bouwerij
44	Jan Focken (Heermans)	:1660	Ruinen	Bouwerij
45	Egbert Fockenszen	:1660	Ruinen	Bouwerij
46	Grietje Fockes Children	:1660	Ruinen	Bouwerij
47-	4 more children of 42/43	:1660	Ruinen	Bouwerij
50				
51	Pieter Janse (Haughwaut)	:1660	Ruinen	Midwout
52	Femmetje Hermans	:1660	Ruinerwold	
53	Leffert Pieterse	:1660	Ruinerwold	
54	Pieter Pieterse children	:1660	Ruinerwold	
55-	2 more children of 51/52	:1660	Ruinerwold	
56				
57	Evertje Dircks	:1660	Meppel	?
58	Egbertje Dircks	:1660	Meppel	?
59	Kier Wolters	:1661	Anholt	Bouwerij
60-	wife, 6 children	:1661	Anholt	Bouwerij
66				
67	Harmtje Barents	:1662	Meppel	?
68	Jan Barentsen	:1662	Meppel	? Midwout
69-	wife, 5 children	:1662	Meppel	? Midwout

74				
75	Lubbert Lubbertsen	:1662	Meppel	?
76	Geesien Roelofs	:1662	Meppel	?
77	Mareytje Lubbers children	:1662	Meppel	Bergen
78	Lubbert Lubberts Jr. of 75/76	:1662	Meppel	N.Ad.
79	Roelof Lubberts (Westervelt)	:1662	Meppel	Hackensack
80	1 more child	:1662	Meppel	?
81	Willem Lubbertsen (Westervelt)	:1662	Meppel	N.Ad.
82	Dirkje Roelofs	:1662	Meppel	N.Ad.
83	Femmetje Willems	:1662	Meppel	N.Ad.
84	Jannetje Willems children	:1662	Meppel	N.Ad.
85-88	4 more children of 81/82	:1662	Meppel	N.Ad.
89	Gerrit Jacobsen	:1662	Meppel	?
90	Bartel Engelbertszen Loth x	:1662	Ruinerwold	N.Ad.
91	Hermantje Barents	:1662	Ruinerwold	N.Ad.
92	Frederick Claesen	:1663	Westenesch	Wiltwijck
93	Roelof Gerritse (van der Werken)	:1663	Meppel	Wiltwijck
94	Jan Roelofs Elting	:1662	Zwiggelte	Midwout
95	Meyndert Hendricks	:1663	Meppel	N.Aft.
96	Aeltje Jans	:1675	Ruinerwold	N.Ad.
97	Aeltje Theunis	:1679	Coevorden	Breuckeler
98	Geertruy Barentse	:1663	Dwingelo	Beverwijck
99	Hendrik Kiers	:1673	Gees	N.Ad.
100	Jan Oostingh		Meppel	Nw.Amstel
101	Catelijntje Martense van Alstyn		Meppel	N.A.
102	Jannetje Martense van Alstyn		Meppel	N.A.
103	Jan Martense van Alstyn	:1652	Meppel	N.A.
104	Dirckje Harmense	:1655	Meppel	N.A.
105	Jan Janse van Alstyn	:1652	Meppel	N.A.
106	Herman Janse van Alstyn	:1652	Meppel	N.A.
107	Abraham Janse van Alstyn	:1652	Meppel	N.A.
108	Lambert Janse van Alstyn	:1652	Meppel	N.A.
109	Janneken Joris	:1662	Coevorden	Beverwijck
110	Teunis Janse	:1660	Coevorden	Breuckeler
111	Bartel Claessen van Ruinen	:1659	Ruinen	Midwout

Place of origin of emigrants	
Meppel	43
Ruinen and Anholt	38
Ruinerwold	10
Coevorden	3
Dwingelo	2
Zwiggelte	2
Gees	1
Westenesch	1
	100
Unknown	11
	111

Place of first known settlement in America	
Bowery	17
New Amsterdam	26
Manhattan	43
Midwout	18
New Amersfoort	13
Breuckelen	2
Long Island	33
Bergen	1
New Jersey	1
Wiltwijck	5
Beverwijck	2
Hackensack	1
Hudson Valley	8
New Amstel	1
Delaware	1
Unknown	25
Total	111

Section IV

THE VAN VOORHEES LETTERS

Compiled By: William John Fisher Lydecker

This section reproduces eleven Van Voorhees letters and provides pertinent comment on their content and significance to Van Voorhees genealogy.

The translations of the four letters which were published in a booklet by the Association in 1962 were reproduced in 1984 in The Van Voorhees Family, Volume I, The First Four Generations *along with a translation of the introductory comments by Dr. H. P. Schaap as originally published in 1961 in* Nieuwe Drenthe Volksalmarak, *(79, 125). Comments in 1962 by Donald A. Sinclair and Helen M. Voorhees called attention to the problems of translating the early Dutch writings. This caution also applies to the two letters published in 1888 in the classic genealogy by Elias Van Voorhis,* A Genealogy of the Van Voorhees Family in America.

The seven letters recently uncovered in 1989 by Rev. William J. F. Lydecker at the New York State Library in Albany New York are presented here, as translated by Dr. Charles T. Gehring.

As a touch of human interest we include an account by Rev. William J. F. Lydecker of his search for and finding of these "new" three hundred year old letters.

The "New" Van Voorhees Letters

Some of the family have known for a long time of the existence of early letters, but where were the originals? Elias Van Voorhis had translations of two letters from Holland published in his genealogy of 1888. In 1962, the family found four and had them translated and published. In preparing this book we wanted to find the originals and have them reviewed by a modern scholar, and I was asked to do so.

I started out at the State Library in Albany, New York; they had never heard of them. I then inquired at the 42nd St. library in Manhattan and again drew a blank. Donald A. Sinclair said that he was sure that they had become part of the papers of Teunis G. Bergen and so I went to the Brooklyn Historical Society that was supposed to have his papers. They had nothing of historical or genealogical nature, only his engineering works. Finally I went back to Albany determined to locate them.

With the help of friends in the New Netherland Project, I was given a list of possible sources up in the archives. Again I appeared to be drawing a blank, but then the staff brought out to me all the Bergen files. I started in on file after file. In the last file of the last box I found a notation "letters in Dutch"! I immediately phoned down to Charles Gehring on the 7th floor and he came up and agreed with me that I had found what I was looking for but instead of four letters, there were eleven written between 1684 and 1729.

There was no way to connect them with the family as the surname was not in use when they were written, but a little study of them told me, with no knowledge of Dutch, that they were what I was looking for, and the library now lists them under Van Voorhees as well as Bergen. The Van Voorhees Association immediately employed Dr. Gehring, who is the principal translator of the New Netherland Project and probably the foremost authority on the Dutch language of that period in the world, to translate them all. Those done in 1962 needed little correction but earlier ones had to be done completely. Apparently those had been given or lent to Teunis G. Bergen and upon his death the State Library was able to buy them with his other genealogical material from his estate.

Of the letters, most were written to Coert Stevens (No. 4 in Vol. 1 of the Van Voorhees Genealogy). One was written to Margaret Polhemus Cornell, mother-in-law of Coert's son Albert. Some were written by Hilbert and Albert Coerts, Geesjen Van Hees, and Jannetje Mooy, all relatives in Holland. Two were written by Casparus Van Zuren, a Domine who was in New Amsterdam from 1677-1685 and returned to Holland. Balthazar Bayard was a

Stuyvesant connection who invested in real estate and Harmanus Blau was some sort of factotum in Gravesend.

The value of these letters is in the contacts that are shown between the family on both sides of the Atlantic, and the tidbits that they tell about life at that time. Finally, how many families other than the patrons and others of great wealth have so many letters from this period?

The Van Voorhees Letters

The Van Voorhees Letters provide much of our knowledge of the relationships of the Van Voorhees Family in America with their kinsmen in the Netherlands. The Van Voorhees Association published newer translations of these four letters in 1962 through the generosity of Dr. Stephen Francis Voorhees of New York City. Mr. Donald A. Sinclair and Miss Helen M. Voorhees interpreted these documents in the light of the accumulated genealogical data. The translations and interpretation are reproduced here because of their genealogical significance and their story of life in the homeland.

The letters were sent from the province of Drenthe in 1684, 1686, 1687 and 1699. One of these (1687) was included in the 1888 Genealogy of the Van Voorhees Family in America. Faulty translations of that letter are corrected in 1962 translations. As a result the long accepted relationship of Steven Coerte and his forebears had to be changed, and we know only that his father's name was Coert.

A map in the 1962 booklet shows a portion of the area around the village of Hees.

Another map of the area is found in the 1888 Genealogy by Elias Van Voorhis and in the Historical Handbook of the Van Voorhees Family (1935). The map of modern Netherlands shows the province of Drenthe in the northeastern area. A house of Hees (photograph of 1908) illustrates the typical thatched roof construction and probably resembles the houses of the 1600's.

Foreword to the Letters

Within these pages contains in translation four letters written from the Netherlands to a son of Steven Coerte, founder of the Van Voorhees family. Of these four letters only one, that written under date of February 9, 1687, from Hilbert Coerts to Coert Stevens, is included in the Genealogy of the Van Voorhees Family in America, compiled by Elias Van Voorhis, published in 1888. There is a synopsis of the translations of a letter from Hilbert Coerts

of Voor Hyes, dated April 13, 1684. In addition Elias Van Voorhis published the translation of a letter from the Reverend Casparus Van Zuren, of Holland, written to Coert Stevense Van Voorhees. This letter is undated, but internal evidence indicates that it was probably written late in 1699. The translation of the letter from Hilbert Coerts published in the Genealogy of 1888 is found to be seriously defective.

The original letters are in the State Library at Albany, New York. Photostats of these were obtained and sent to Dr. H. P. Schaap in Holland to be studied. In 1961 the four letters were printed in the Nieuwe Drentse Volksalmanak (New Drenthe Peoples' Almanac) with an introduction by Dr. Schaap. This introduction contains considerable information about the use and disposition of church lands between the tenth and the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries, with emphasis on the property under the jurisdiction of the cloister of Dikninge which was originally at Ruinen. Some of this background material has been omitted here as not germane to the story of the letters. Where the portion of Dr. Schaap's introduction is omitted, that fact is indicated.

It will be noted that, in the following translation, the writers of the letters are found addressing their American correspondent, Coert Stevens, as "cousin"—not "nephew." as in the translation in the Genealogy of 1888. The original word in Dutch is "neve" (the modern form is "neef"), which can be translated either as cousin or nephew. As to which of these meanings applies in the present case, note Albert Coerts' letter of October 26, 1686, addressed to his well beloved "neve," Coert Stevens. He begins by acknowledging the receipt of Coert's letter written in November, 1684, from which he had learned of the death of "my great-uncle Steven." Uncle Steven is obviously Coert's father, Steven Coerte, the immigrant to this country, who had died on February 16 1684. If Albert Coerts was a great-nephew of Steven Coerte, then he was obviously "cousin" to the latter's son.

The erroneous assumption that Hilbert Coerts and Albert Coerts were brothers (actually they were great-nephews) of Steven Coerte, the American forebear, was rendered easy by the fact that all three bore the same patronymic, "Coerts," which means "son of Coert." As it happens, though, these gentlemen were not sons of the same Coert. The father of Hilbert and Albert was a Coert Albertse, whose name does indeed appear in some of the early land records of the Ruinen area. Note that in the following letters Hilbert and Albert give information concerning various aunts and uncles bearing the patronymic, "Albertse," although nothing concerning their own father, who was obviously not living. The latter's name, based on his son's patronymic (Coerts) and the patronymic (Albertse) borne by

his brothers and sisters, must be assumed to be Coert Albertse. The patronymic, Albertse, indicates that his own father was Albert, probably the Albert Coerts listed as a renter of lands in the vicinity during the early 1600's and presumably also the brother of Steven Coerte who came to this country in 1660.

It will be seen that this revision of relationships long accepted in the family changes completely our picture of Steven Coerts' ancestry in the homeland. No longer do we have records of three generations preceding him in the Netherlands (as published in the Genealogy of 1888); instead we are reduced to the mere knowledge inherent in his patronymic, that his father's name was Coert. Beyond that we know nothing definite of his forebears.

Although we have lost a generation or so of ancestors in the Netherlands, the letters still tell their own story of life in the homeland, and indicate that a fairly close connection was maintained for many years after Steven Coerte had brought his family to the new country. That in itself is something of a satisfaction as well as a matter of interest.

The quaint and, to us, unusual phraseology of the times during which the letters were written has been retained in the translation so far as this can be done and still convey the meaning of the writers. Likewise the various spellings of both individual and place names have been retained to indicate the lack of conformity common to the times.

The translation of Dr. Schaap's introduction, written in modern Dutch, was made by Rev. John D. Muyskens, who was from 1915 to 1959 a member of the Arcot Mission of the Reformed Church of America in South India, of which Voorhees College in Vellore is a part. Mr. Muyskens was for many years a member of the governing board of Voorhees College. The translation of the letters, which are in old Dutch, presented a problem. We were fortunate in securing the services of Mr. D. Thomas Stiel, a pre-ministerial student at Rutgers University. Mr. Stiel is a native of Holland who has lived in this country since World War II; first in Canada, more recently in New Brunswick, New Jersey. To both of these gentlemen we are indebted for their invaluable assistance without which the letters could not have been published. We are grateful to Dr. Stephen Francis Voorhees who not only conferred with Dr. Schaap while travelling in Holland but who has been most generous in bearing the expense of both the translation and the printing of the letters.

Donald A. Sinclair
Helen M. Voorhees
New Brunswick, N.J.
November, 1962

The Four Letters of Hilbert and Albert Coerts

Sent from Drenthe in the Years 1684, 1686, 1687, and 1699
*By Dr. H. P. Schaap**

Through fortunate circumstances and with the kind assistance of Rutgers University at New Brunswick, New Jersey, U.S.A., we have been given the opportunity to pass on to the readers of the "Nieuwe Drenthe Volksalmanak" four letters written by two brothers, both real Drent people, to their relatives, also Drent people. All four letters were sent to their cousin, Coert Stevens van Voorhees, son of their great-uncle, Steven Coerte, who crossed the ocean with his family and who has left behind in the United States of North America many descendants in fortunate and honorable circumstances.

The letters of 1684, 1687, and 1699 were written by Hilbert Coerts of Hees near Ruinen, and in two of these, following the example of his cousin in America, he calls himself Van Voorhees; and in the letter of 1699 he calls himself Hilbert Coerts "in het riegien," which seems to indicate that he was well known in the Ruinen area. The letter of 1683 was written by Albert Coerts, who also called himself Van Voorhees. He lived at Hoogeveen and was married to Aeltien Coops Addemeraels, daughter of the former mayor of Echten, Coop Luitiens (or "Copluytys").

Concerning this Van Voorhees family there appeared in the "Nieuwe Drentse Volksalmanak" for 1943 a scholarly essay, by J. Poortman under the title "Steven Coerts, a Drent Emigrant of 1660." And the same writer wrote a novel entitled "Steven Coerts, a History of a Ruinen Family of the 17th Century." (Meppel, undated; out-of-print.) This last work we are not taking into consideration, because it is a novel. In his article in the "Nieuwe Drentse Volksalmanak" for 1943, J. Poortman writes, "Three letters have been saved, written by the Drenthe family in 1684, 1687, and 1699," but it seems evident that one other Drenthe letter has been saved, namely the one of 1686, that came from Hoogeveen.

[At this point there follow several pages relating to the history of the church lands of the area. These are omitted as not being germane to the story.]

Now we pass over a few centuries, because it is time that we finally hear something concerning the writers of the letters mentioned briefly at the beginning of our article. But before we do that, first the reader needs to gain some

*Translated from the original article in Dutch published in the Nieuwe Drentse Volksalmanak, 1961.

insight as to what happened in connection with Dikninge and its tenant farmers and their possessions at the time of the introduction (from above!) of the Reformation and the accompanying secularization of the church properties in Drenthe. In the sixteenth century the "double cloister" Dikninge, through the steady decline in the number of monks, gradually became a nunnery, an institution for prominent ladies. The lady entrant received the title of "vrouwe" or abbess, and the abbot was reduced to a sort of figurehead.

After the Count of Lalaing, Rennenberg, passed over to the side of Spain (or perhaps one could better say, to the side of the malcontents) Drenthe also experienced in 1580 its "storm against idols"—not at the hands of the local population but of the State troops (even the abbey of Dikninge had to believe this). "Because of the continuing war troubles" the cloister population went to the safety of Hasselt, the city of "The Holy Place." Scarcely any of the personnel had remained in Dikninge on guard. This "Hasselt banishment" lasted from 1580 to 1590.

"Away from his abbey in exile, Hermann van der Burcht died, the last tragic figure in the long row of prelates who had followed one another for four and a half centuries."

The journey of Price Maurits and Willem Lodewyk to Groningen brought new miseries and disasters over the old countryside. Twice on the journey to and from, the army passed right by the abbey. On its return journey it was preceded by whole herds of cattle which harassed Drenthe farmers were attempting to take in safety to the grasslands in the north of Overijssel. In the succeeding war years again many of the residents of Drenthe fled; but the Dikningers remained, hoping for a blessing. But scarcely was Drenthe in 1597 freed for good from the Spanish rule when Willem Lodewyk took firmly in hand the restoration of the area.

On the 11th of November he asked the noted Menso Alting, who was born in Eelde and lived in Emden in East Friesland, and who as early as 1566 had at Sleen preached the new doctrine (though without any success) to consider with his secretary Everhard van Reidt, by what means the introduction of the Reformation could best be accomplished.

The "secularization" -or the "making worldly"-of the church properties, which after 1603 was taken up vigorously in Drenthe, won out in Assen earlier than in Dikninge. There also in Assen the Cistersian Women's Convent had long since become a sort of "Young Ladies Institution," but in Dikninge it did not go so readily. The "Women" and the "Young Ladies" remained separate as long as possible since they enjoyed the support of many a member of the knighthood both in Drenthe and in Overijssel, who had members of their families or relatives in the convent. But finally these last "con-

vent maidens" were also placed "on alimentation." They, along with many a pastor in Drenthe who did not wish to become unfaithful to his old belief, or who failed his examination for the ministry, went on half-pay or received a retirement pension, and Dikninge gave more pension than Assen, for it was richer.

Let us not forget this: that when we speak of the "abolition of the abbey" we only mean its abolition as a religious body. As an institution in the legal sense, as a financial complex, as a body corporate with a fixed purpose. Dikninge survived up into the French period. According to "The instruction of the States General" of December 8, 1601, to the newly erected "college of Drost and Deputies of Drenthe," it was prescribed, "That both of the maidens' organizations shall remain and be kept in being and the support of the conventuals must be paid out of the aforesaid church properties." Dikninge continued to be an independent community of estates, over which the governing body of the institution acted not as owner, but as "trustee," and administrator. In 1618 the old guardian of the abbey, not a very careful administrator, was retired and succeeded by a new administrator, Gerhard Struuck, appointed by Drost and Deputies. From then on, the lessees and the payers of rent had to deal with him. He was a stiff and energetic manager. But for the farmers there was in fact little change. This was also true in another matter. Most of them. although with very little enthusiasm, are said to have changed from Catholic to Protestant.

In some localities there came in place of good-natured and not very demanding pastors, strict, demanding, and almost sour preachers. As I wrote in my article concerning Menso Alting's stay at Sleen, "The holy water sprinkler and the little chapels by the Stations of the Cross, that they understood; but predestination and such doctrines left them cold." But instructions and knowledge of the Bible (and hence also knowledge of the Netherlands language) were very much improved. And equally "in Ruinen" the exchange was certainly not a bad one. The last pastor of Ruinen, Steven Sasse, lived with his concubine and for a long time had the bad taste to reside in Dikninge with this companion. P. Mathias wrote about him, "as the last monk of Dikninge he did his abbey little honor." (Fortunately Coert Stevens was not a son of his. For your consolation I write this.)

The oldest known ancestor of Steven Coerts, as also of the letter-writers, Hilbert Coerts and Albert Coerts, we first read about in the year 1542 (still a Catholic time) in the "Ordelen" of the Etstoel of Drenthe, when he was involved in a certain property law case with a certain Henrick Leukensz. There he is named Coerdt to Heess. In the court record (Volume II, Folio 10) we read, "between Coerdt to Heess on one side and young man

Hendrick Leukenns on the other." And in Folio 15 it is ordered, "That both parties in connection with a sold field, of which one part is better than the other, for this reason shall make division. And of the transaction both parties, between now and the next court session shall agree in friendship whether there shall be at the next court a judgment thereof if it be fair."

Fifty-three years later, viz. 1595, we come across in the account book for the years 1595-1599 one Koert tho Middlehees. That can hardly be the same person as Coert to Heess in 1542; but he surely belongs to the same lineage.

1595 -Received from Koert tho Middelhees 5 gold guilders of the old debt and still owes 2 gold guilders 7-0-0 Sept. 1595—Received from Koert tho Middelhees 4 daler and 3 stuivers, by rent master's measure for hay rent. 5-17-0

There appears a balance of 111 stuivers from 1595.

From the accounts of the rent master of Dikninge for 1621, we then finally get a clearer view of the members of the family who were the lessees of the three farms, Voorhees, Middelhees, and Achterhees, of the Dikninge corporation.

At Voorhees lives Albert te Voorhees

At Middelhees lives Jan Coerts

At Achterhees lives Coert te Achterhees

Jan Coerts of Middelhees seems to be the son of Coert tho Middelhees in 1595. And we run across the old Koert in the accounts of the rent master of Dikninge in the year 1625. In Folio 16 we read, "Coert te Middelheys holds in mortgage two pieces of farm land, situated at Suid-Esch, for 100 gold guilders." That land was redeemed in 1625 by the rent master of Dikninge. In 1632 the rental of Middelheys also included the two fields of which the said Coert te Middelheys had held in mortgage. Also from those records of the rent master we can learn of what size the three farms were:

Voorhees contained 21 "mudden" (1) of farmland and 7- 1/2"dachmaet" (2) of grainland, which again for a period of six years beginning May, 1621, is leased to Albert van Voerheess, for 28 "mudden" yearly, which according to the overseer has been received for the first year. Rental—28 "muddden."

Middelhees contains 19-1/2 "mudden" of farm land and 11 "dachmaet" of grainland. This is herewith and for a period of six years, beginning May, 1621, leased again to Jan Coerts, for a yearly lease of 35 "mudden" of rye which according tothe overseer has been received for the first year. Rental —35 "mudden."

Achterheys containing 18 "mudden" of farm land, 10 "dachmaet" of hayland is likewise leased by the Drost and Deputies for a period of six years, beginning May, 1621, to Coert t' Achterheys, for a sum of 24 "mudden" of rye of which also payment for the first year has been received here by the overseer." Rental—23 "mudden."

In 1626 the rentals were suddenly increased, and we note a change: Voorhees and Middelhees were then rented by Jonker Van Boetzelaer and Achterhees by Jacob Osting te Spier. But presumably the old renters as sub-tenents remained on the farms. In 1630 Van Boetzelaer again leased "Voorhees" and Middelhees" to Albert te Voorhees and Jan Coerts. And "Coert te Achterhees" comes back to Achterhees in 1632.

In 1642 there appears on "Achterhees, Hilbert Coerts t' Achterhees, presumably a son of the aforesaid Coert t' Achterhees and the writer in later years of three of the four letters sent to America. (3) But of this great-uncle Steven Coerts (the emigrant of 1660) we have herein had no notice. But due to a fortunate happening we see him appear finally in the manuscript Ground Inventory of 1642 for Mijnheer van Ruynen and indeed among the chief crofters in the manor of Ruinen"

1642—Steven Coerts

-3 "mudden" and 2 skepels (4)	539-0-0
House and garden	300-0-0
	839-0-0

And we meet him once again in the accounts of Johan Struuck, rent master of the Dikninge Cloister for the year 1658: "Pols-Erv at Ruyne, 17-1/2 "mudden" of farmland, 7-1/2 "dachwerck." (5) This was rented to Steven Coerts on March 22, 1658, for the previous rental such as the renter thereof had paid yearly at the rate of 28 "mudden" of rye continuing for this year; the amount comes to 28 "mudden."

In the accounts of 1661 Steven Coerts is again missing. On the 14th of March of that year the "Pols Erve" was leased to Hendrick Frens, the same person evidently as the Hendrick Friens from the rearmost convent, named in the letter of Hilbert Coerts, "in het Riegien" (6) who in 1699 had bought movable properties from the heirs of Steven Coerts. There must evidently have been family connection with the Frens family, because on April 5, 1663, there were married at Ruinen: Jan Vrens and Albertjen Alberts.

From the above facts it would seem that Steven Coerts never settled on the Voorhees farm as an independent farmer; he was originally a crofter (1642), not a landowner, which in Drenthe formed a separate class. But in the course of the years he reached a higher status, as witness his leasing

of the middle-sized "Pols-Erve" which was rated at 28 "mudden." In closing, let me tell a little more of the family relationships as we have been able to reconstruct them from the four letters that follow:

Hilbert Coerts (of t'Riegien) names seven uncles and aunts, viz. Uncle Hendrick Alberts at Twyel (Tweeloo), near Meppel, formerly under Ruinerwold; Aunt Merchien at Hught, widow of Jan Meeuwis; Aunt Geertien at Oshaer by Echten, married; Uncle Luytgen Alberts, at Haakswold, under Ruinerwold, and a child; Uncle Jan Alberts, at Hesselingen, southwest of Meppel (Dikninge overseer); Uncle Hilbert Alberts (left two sons and a daughter); Uncle Wessell Alberts of Amsterdam, Bickers-Island, who left wife and daughter.

The letter writer, Hilbert Coerts, who must have been born about 1645, lived originally at Achterhees, but later had his own house built in "the Ryegien," so he is called (more or less officially) "Hilbert Coerts int Riegien." And we found him recorded three times as such in the baptismal book of Ruinen, as when on July 1, 1683, on July 20 1684, and on February 15, 1691, he had children baptized whose forenames where not given except in the last case: February 15, 1691, the child of "Hilbert int Regen" baptized and named Court Van Voorhees. At the beginning of our article we have already said ". . . from the example of his cousin in America." The above mentioned children were definitely children of his second marriage, since he was twice married.

He also had three brothers, as appears in the letters: Jan Coerts at Voorhees, married to a daughter of Jan Vrericks of Nuyl; Wessel Coerts, living at Veeningen near Zuidwolde, married, with five children; and the youngest brother, Albert Coerts, carpenter, wood dealer, living at Echtens-Hoogeveen, married to Aeltyn Coops Addemeraels, by whom he had two daughters, Swaentyn and Jacoby. This is the writer of the 1686 letter.

There was also a second cousin, Marchien Stevens, at Dwingelo, the oldeest sister of Coert Stevens in America, to whom the letters were sent. So now we let the letters follow.

Footnotes

1. A unit of land measurement apparently peculiar to the Drenthe area. A "mudde" of land is that amount that can be sowed with one "mud" (hectolitre) of grain.

2. A measure of land, i.e., a piece of land of a size which can be harvested in one day.

3. Dr. Schaap is in error here as the Hilbert Coert of 1642 could not have been the man of that name who wrote the letters of 1684-1699 as the latter was not born until about three years later (1645).

4. A measure of land area, i.e., the amount of land which can be sowed with one skepel of grain.

5. A measure of land in terms of the amount of work that can be done in a day.

6. Apparently this is a corruption of what would be spelled in modern Dutch as "Rijtje," i.e., the (Little) Row; in other words a row of houses known locally by that designation.

The Letters

Dear and well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens tho Voor Hees,

I Hilbert Coerts tot Voor Hyes with my wife and children wish you a thousand times a good night and we inform you that we, glory to God, are still strong and healthy and we trust to learn this from you as well. Further, well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens, I inform you that I received that letter which you wrote on October 16, 1683, and learned from this letter that you and your wife and children and father and mother, brother and sister are still in good health, which I learned with gladness. Further, well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens, I understand from your letter that you very much complain about my brevity in letter writing and I can assure you truthfully that this very much astonishes me because this is the first letter which I received from you since the one which was brought to me by Jan Eltynge; this letter came here from Zwolle the sixth of April 1684 and I was in Zwolle myself in the year 1680 and gave there a letter to the widow of Tonies Hilbrans and she said that all her letters had reached Amsterdam already and that she would deliver these as well; later on I sent other letters to her and in the year 1682 I sent another letter by a man who came to our house one night and told that he was going to travel to New Netherland and requested that I write a recommendation to you. I am therefore highly astonished that it could be possible that those letters did not arrive.

Further, well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens I was glad to learn about your health and the health of your whole family, and that you promised that next year you will write a big letter about all the opportunities of the country, if your health so allows; and if my health allows I will send you one too. Further, well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens I have to tell you something about what happens in the country of Drijente [Drenthe]. At present we still live in peace, as long as it will please God, but we have great fear of a war with France at present, but the great God can provide if it will please Him so and we are worthy of it. But well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens we had two very bad grain years in the years 1682 and 1683 so that an ordinary farmer cannot help himself with his own grain which gives a great deal of anxiety among the people. Yet we should not complain, we can drive away those punishments; if the Lord allows us to live in peace we can almost forget the punishment.

But the great God still provided that the rye is cheap, one can buy good rye from Meppelt [Meppel] or from Stynwijck [Steenwijk], one guilder per bushel, and so all other merchandise is reasonably priced. Further, well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens, there are still four of us brothers left and we are reasonably prosperous and I, Hilbert Coert built a new house in

the riegijen (literally a row of houses) where I now live and which is good and I have there so much business that I can keep three horses and eight cows so I am doing all right and my brother Jan now lives at Voorheys in the old place and he is reasonably prosperous as well, and my brother Wessel is married, at Veeninge, and he is making out all right as well, and my brother Albert is a carpenter and lives in the Hoe[geveense] Echtens marsh and he is doing all right as well.

Further, well beloved cousin Coert Stevens I must tell you of your dear sister Mergin Stevens (1); they moved away from Spyre [Spier] and now live at Dwyengelo [Dwingelo] and they are in charge of the farm of the brother-in-law [of] Jan van Echten in the west-end Dwyengelo and they rented out their farm at Spyre because it was somewhat small for them and they are doing rather well there.

And I must tell you too about our other relations and also those of our uncles and aunts who are still alive. First of all, my uncle Hendreick "op den Twijel" [Tweeloo] is still alive, but his wife died and he has still five children alive and he fares reasonably well; secondly aunt Mergin is still alive "op die Hoght" and uncle Jan Mewus is dead; and aunt Mergin lives with her son-in-law and daughter and they are doing very well; and my aunt Geortin (2) is still healthy, with her husband and children, and she lives on the "Oshaer" (3) near Echten and she is doing very well. And my uncle Luijtgen Alberts is married, [living] at Hackesvolt [Haakswold], and he has one child by his wife, and he, too, is doing quite well; and one daughter of my uncle Jan Alberts is still alive and is married [living] at Hesselijnge [Heszelinge] on the place which my deceased uncle Jan had bought and she too is doing well; my uncle Hilbert Alberts left two sons and a daughter who are doing fine and my uncle Wessel Alberts left a wife and daughter, and she still lives at Amsterdam on Beckerseylandt [Bickers Island] behind the sluice, number 16, and she too is doing well; further, concerning our other relations, at Myddelhijes [Middel Hees] they are doing reasonably well too, but the oldest son is married and lives with his wife with them and they can not get along with the young woman and the son is remaining in the house and the old folks are going to come in May 1684 to Ruyn [Ruinen] to live with their youngest son who lives on his farm; further, his sister Henderixken is married and [living] in DeWyck and she too is doing well; and the youngest brother Jan Coerts married a daughter of Jan Henderickes from "Ehorst" (4) and lives at Ruijne and is a dyer of "the blue guild" and he is doing very well too; and the oldest sister Luetger died and her daughter lives in the "an hout" and she is doing fine as well; and the other sister Gesyn lives in Den Bos [Bois-de-luc] and she is doing fine as well; further of Jan Wessels his daughter Hyellygen is still alive but her husband is dead and she

and her children are doing fine. The youngest daughter is married "op het wout" and now lives in Hackeswolt and is among the richest people on the "Wold"; further, at Oldenhave Luijtgen, the weaver, is dead as is his wife, and his son Geert is married [and living] on the place and his oldest son Frens is married to Cerstryne Baron and he is in charge of the farm; and the youngest son Henderyck is married to a daughter of Remmelt [who lives in] Cloester and they live together on the "haer" (5) and are doing very well; and the one daughter Fumme married Jan Goessens and Jan Goessens is dead and the other daughters live in the home of their brother Geert; further at Ansen Jan Luijtgens and niece Hendereck-in are still in good health and they have their oldest son Coert Jans living with them and they are also doing well and he has still another son living with them; and a niece Rijcke is dead and his son Vrens and daughter Altyen are both married [and living] in Ansen and both are doing fine.

Now my well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens, I don't know very much else to write except that all things remain much the same as when you lived here; as to laws and statutes, I see no changes in them, but it is so bad here in this country that I don't believe that there are here such old people who ever experienced a time like this, and if we can only live in peace then everything will work out for the best; but people here are afraid of a war with the French and when this happens woe to our country, for nobody nowadays has enough money as they had before, but we trust that it will please the great God to protect us. Further, well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens please do not delay the writing of letters although you may not receive letters; this is not my fault. I don't let a year pass without writing a letter and you wrote that every year you mailed your letters very carefully, and yet I declare that this is the first letter which I received since that Jan Ultynghe visited us, and, my well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens, I wish you and your dear family and especially your old father and mother, and not excepting anybody, a hundred thousand good nights and trust that we will hear the very same from you and we await here a letter from you at your very first possible opportunity.

Dearly-bloved cousin Coert Stevens I would have liked to read still another of your letters in which you wrote how your wealth had increased in that country in the time you have lived there, how big your family already is, because I have previously understood that it is still a good country. Be so kind as to inform us at every opportunity how much it is there and I promise you to write again at the first opportunity how we have made out, whether we still live in peace or not.

This letter was written in a hurry because there was no opportunity to send the letter to Zwolle; if it so happens that I have more time to write then I will write you about everything. If you write tell us about all those

who are from this region, whether they are still alive or not and how they are doing; and I pray that you wish all our good relations and friends a hundred thousand good nights; herewith I trust you and your whole family to the care of the great God who lives forever, Amen.

This letter was written on April 13th, 1684, and I hope that it will reach you with the help of this great God; herewith I remain, your respectful servant and cousin, Actum Voor Hijes in the Province of Drenthe. In the Manor of Ruinen.

Notes:
(1) Marchien Stevens. (2) Geerte. (3) The "Oshaer" was a farm near Echten. (4) The "Ehorst" seems to have been a farm. (5) The "haer" may be another farm, probably an abbreviation of the "oshaer".

Done at Hoogeveen, October 26th, 1686

Respected and well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens of Voorhies,

I Albert Coerts of Voorhies and my wife Aeltyn Coops Addemeraels of Echten wish a hundred thousand good nights to you and your family and all your relatives; now further I want to acknowledge the content of your letter of November 10th, 1684, and learned from this letter of the death of great-uncle Steven; I wish for him the eternal joy and for you and us as well if it please the Lord. You are my kin and I will keep the friendship with my dear relatives and I will continue to write to my dear cousin Coert Stevens as long as it pleases the great God to spare me.

Further, I must tell my dear cousin about my life and business; and I further inform my cousin that I have married the oldest daughter of the sheriff Copluyttys [Coop Luityens] of Echten, now decased, who was sheriff of Echten when the relatives left, and I still live at Hoogeveene and I built there a new house and I sell lumber and nails and do some carpentry work and I have a peatmarsh too and I also have peat dug; further, I must inform my cousin that I have two daughters by my wife and the oldest was born in 1683, the 16th of December, Friday night between two and three o'clock and her name is Swaentyn, and the youngest was born in the year 1685, Thursday before Easter and her name is Jaeckoby

Elysebet and she was baptized [i.e. named] after one of my wife's relatives, and my wife and children are fairly well.

Now I must tell you how large Hoogeveen is in number of houses because there are already approximately 300 houses and this increases year after year.

And now must I tell you about my three brothers: my brother Hilbert, the oldest, and he is doing quite well, God be praised; and my brother Jan, the second, is doing quite well too and he and his wife and children are in good health; and my brother Wessel, the third, is doing well too and he and his wife and children are in good health too and he lives in Veninge near Suijttwolde [Zuidwolde].

Further, I must inform you that your sister Marrichgyn Stewens (1) is still in good health as are her husband and children and they are doing reasonably well, and they live at Dwingeloo. Further, I must tell you that cousin Hilbert of Mydelhies died in the year 1685, in the month of July, and he died at Ruinen, for you must understand that he lived in Ruinen; he and his youngest son and his wife could not get along too well with the wife of his oldest son, therefore the old folks had moved from Hies to live in Ruinen with them [the youngest son and his wife].

Further, I desire to request my dear cousin do me the favor to write to me so that I may know whether or not my letter arrived, and when you do write, address your letter to Albert Coers van Voorhies, lumber merchant on the Hooge Echtens peat-marsh. Now I don't know much more to write for this trip, so I wish you all the blessings and the Kingdom of God. Amen.

Your respectful youngest cousin and true friend

Albert Coerts van Voorhies.

Note:

(1) Marrichgyn Stewens is also written Mergin Stevens and Marchien Stevens.

Praise the Lord forever.—February 9th, 1687

Respected cousin Coert Stevens van Voorhyes,

I Hilbert Coerts at Voorhyes write once more this letter so that you can see that we still have a desire to know about your wellbeing. Further,

well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens I inform you that I received a letter from you which you sent through Jelyes Prefest and learned from it about the health and welfare of yourself and your entire family and also that your son is married although scarcely twenty years old. I learned also that your son bought from our cousins, namely Jan Cijers and Cousin Henderickin, their farm and he will pay for it yearly seven hundred guilders and he also maintains the house for them and further he will feed three cows free. I am astonished how Jan Cijers has gained so much in this period since he was kind of a prodigal spender. We are very much surprised and it cannot but be a very good country over there.

Well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens, if at this time a man went to that country with his whole family and were to bring with him approximately two thousand guilders would such a man have an opportunity to get ahead, and assuming, well-beloved cousin, that in Drenthe still lived your father or brother, would you be willing to advise them to settle where you are? I request from you, when you have time and opportunity, be so good as to write us all the details about the land, as I shall now do.

Further, well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens I inform you that we are all together in good health and my brother Jan Coerts also and my brother Albert Coerts likewise, and all of us are doing reasonably well. Concerning our uncles: my uncle Henderck Alberts is still living at Tweel [Tweeloo] and is doing very well, and my uncle Luytgen Alberts lives in Hackeswolt and he is also still doing well, and aunt Merigien at Hught is also still doing well and aunt Geertien at the "Oshaer" is still doing well, she and her whole family. These are the ones left of our father's family.

Further, well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens, your dear sister requested me to tell you all about her which I shall do to the best of my ability. She lives presently in Dwengelo [Dwingeloo] and [he] is the manager of the estate of squire van Oldengaren and they are doing well and they will move in May to the market square to the sheriff's house and then he will be manager for the sheriff.

Further, well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens you had asked in your letter to be informed about Jan Cyer's house in Stynwyck [Steenwijk]; the house was sold, as Henderck Boujans has told me himself and he said to me that he himself was going to write Jan Coersen how everthing stood and that the sale had incurred so many expenses so that according to his calculations Jan Cyers would still be able to receive three hundred French guilders and he told me that he would send the invoice for the expenses incurred, and that Jan Cyers should send him an order as to where he should put the money.

Further, well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens, Henderck of Ruinen herewith requests that you will have the goodness to inform him about

the well-being of the heirs of Vocke Jans of Ruinen; and Henderck Vocken is a half-brother of Vocke Jans and he complains that he has not yet received a letter neither from his brother's wife or children, and he is anxious to receive a letter from them and to know who is still alive and how they are doing.

Further, well beloved, I must tell you something about how things are in our country and what has happened during this winter. A terrible catastrophe or a severe punishment has come upon Groningerlandt [Groningen] and Emderland [Emden] and Ostvreeslandt [East Friesland] because of a northwest wind which about ten o'clock put Gronningerlandt completely under water by which great damage occurred; two ships with people are gone and also entire villages with people and cattle so that not many have their lives, and the water has stood in the streets of the city of Grongen, and it is said that the country is in a terrible state at present, and, there having been at least four thousand people drowned, and such beautiful cattle which is to be lamented; but what is it? God the lord has punished the land, not unjustly. O, man is to blame; his sins are too great.

Concerning the situation in our native country, called the country of Drent, it is here a moneyless time but that is the most we can complain about, for everything is normal as it was when you lived here; we have nowadays cheap rye, fifteen or sixteen stuivers per skepel [term of dry measure]. one eighth butter has stood all summer at about seven guilders per eighth (1) and other merchandise accordingly. My well-beloved cousin must favor us if he will write us again by way of Amsterdam and not by way of Swol [Zwolle]. We cannot get a letter from Swol without its costing us eleven or twelve stuivers to Hilbrant van Dijckhuysen [Dyckuysen] over there; and when he informs us through the mail that the letters are at his house that costs us four stuivers; and then if we want them we are still obilged to travel to Swol and fetch the letters.

Further, well-beloved cousin I want to show you a different route; be so good as to direct the letters to Amsterdam, Byeckerseeylandt [Bickers Island] behind the sluice next to number 16, the house with the door where the yellow clapper hangs, to the widow of Wessel Alberts, carpenter of Voorhyes, then we will surely receive them. Now cousin I do not know much more to write except to wish you and your family the best, especially for your souls and also for your bodies and I wish you peace on earth and eternally hereafter, amen.

According to your letter you are still waiting for a letter; how this comes about I do not know because I sent them all by way of Swol. I don't know what is wrong unless it happened that the letter failed to arrive but be-

cause of this don't fail to write and also to have it delivered in Amsterdam, at Byeckerseeylandt behind the sluice, next to number 16, the door with the yellow clapper, to the widow of Wessel Alberts, carpenter of Voorhyes.

Well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens, when you write again be so kind as to let us know about your sisters and brothers over there, how big your family is already, and I will let you know the size of our troop: I have two children out of my first marriage and four from my last wife; and our Jan has [for a wife] a daughter of Jan Vrereckes of Nuijl [Nuyl] by whom he has four children; and our Wessel is married and living in Veeninghe and he has five children by his wife; and our Albert in Hoogheveene has two children by his wife.

Herewith be commended forever to the great God and when the opportunity presents itself be so kind and write to us again.

Your respectful cousin

Hilbert Coerts

Note:

(1) one eighth of a barrel. Herewith is meant a small barrel of butter containing about twenty-five or thirty pounds (Dutch pounds of 500 grams).

1699. Bless the Lord always, and forget not all his benefits.

Respected well-beloved cousin Coert Stevens of Voorhyes.

I received from the hands of Pyeter Byernies the letter which you wrote on August 30th, 1698, and understand from it that all of you are still healthy, also prosperous and living in a good state of peace, and that you also have a good government which I have read about with pleasure, and I inform you that all of us are still in the same condition for which all of us are obliged to thank God.

Further, we send all of you, no one excluded, our heartfelt greetings and [you] say for us to all our good relatives many good nights from all of us.

Further, my cousin writes about the money which I have forwarded to Amsterdam; this amounted to two hundred ninety two guilders and eighteen stuivers from which your dear sister Mergin Stevens received

[her share] as you have written to her. But my cousin Coert Stevens must know that during the time the money has been in Amsterdam the new shillings have been set at five and one half stuivers; how much that amounts to I do not know. I don't know how much it was before and they must send you the balance and I do not doubt that this also will happen; And I kept the account with Hendericke Boujans, as you have written, i.e., that he should make it according to his conscience, which he has done; and from him I received these two hundred and ninety- two guilders and eighteen stuivers and no more; and I went with Peter Bernien to your sister who told me that she received of this amount two hundred and thirty-eight guilders; the balance must still be settled, but the loss room the new shilling must still be deducted from this, and you must make allowance for this.

Dear cousin, you write that you are doing very well, that you can pay your debts and that you then still can save. This makes me very happy, but I must say that here in your native country in these times not so much gain can be made.

You must know that Henderick Friens from behind the Convent bought your movable goods, but no progress was made with the furniture. The situation is thus: the old people have died on the place and the oldest son has now sublet the farm and he cannot do any more farming which is also not without reason, this happens more and more often. The land is valued too much, one must presently give at the very least ground rent in six or seven payments; and the head tax is doubled as well. Wherever one used to pay four stuivers, one now must pay eight stuivers. The same is true for rent on farms, which is doubled as well, and one must pay one guilder per year for each horse, and for one bee hive two stuivers every half year. Thus the country is heavily burdened even though there is peace, however for the time being there is still no hope for relief, for the reason that the country has fallen behind to such an extent in this war that it is so much concerned with interest to be paid that the available capital does not suffice.

But the Lord can turn it for the better with good result, amen.

Beloved cousin Coert Stevens of Voorhyes, I must inform you who of us are still alive; there were seven of us, but now there are no more than my brother Jan Coerts and I. As to my father's brothers and sisters, only Aunt Gertie of the "Ossehaer" and uncle Luchgen in Haakswolt are alive. Concerning my children: I have by my first wife one son and a daughter, and by my second wife five sons, the oldest of the five is about twenty years and the youngest is about eight years.

My cousin writes that he is about sixty years old, that his hair is white and that his strength is decreasing; and I, Hilbert Coerts, am in my fifty-fifth year and, thanks be to God, I am still reasonably healthy and strong.

Concerning groceries, these are very expensive these days, the rye is about three guilders per skepel and other grain sells accordingly, and all the foodstuffs are expensive so that there is much anxiety among many people, but it behooves us to think no other than that these are our deserved calamities. Our time will be soon running out; as long as I can write and I hope that you will not fail to do the same.

Herewith I am ending and commending you all to God's salvation and blessings, for time and eternity, you and your whole family, and [I] remain eternally your respectful cousin and servent, amen.

Hilbert Coerts in het riegien.

1699, the 10th of March.

The Seven "New" Letters

[9617-293; B. Bayard to Capt. Berry, copy to Koert Stevense; May 12 1693]

In N. York. 12 May 1693

Since my last letter to you, for which I have yet to receive a reply, my brother came to my house, after returning from Ambooy, while K. Stevense was here. He told K. Stevense that you were leaving the piece of land farthest back for 1800, which was more than 100 morgens according to your estimate. He requested K. Stevensen's decision on it, saying that he was sure that there was not more than 70 or 80 morgens, [and] that he was offered 200 gl. more for it through my persuasion (to avoid our dispute), than he thought it was worth; and that he still wanted to give 1200 gl. for the company, and if there was more than 100 morgens, that he would give 12gl. for every morgen more than [100]. This I trust my brother has written to you.

In my last letter I wrote you that K. Stevense has placed his case in Mr. Niccols's hands, who has [gone] to Philadelphia and expect back again in a week, and that he shall let no time pass, which will assuredly act against your expectation to your great expense, blame and disrespect, because even if your patent was offered to K. Stevense, with the limits and boundary stakes according to the sale, then the same would still be declared worthless by any knowledgeable who has seen it, and what judge will allow K. Stevens to receive a patent and authentication, for the amount of money he has paid, that is not worth it? To be sure, it will not only detract from your honor and credit but also give many the means to cause you and yours trouble in time.

I have heard K. Stevense say in the presence of many that he was satisfied again with his money with proper interest, and if I am not mistaken without interest, if he would leave to the judgment of one or two knowledgeable persons, what kind of a conveyance was appropriate for his investment.

What honor or profit can you gain thereby, and what distinction is there if you are constrained by a judge from receiving payment; or if wise people call for justice and equity? I believe that in the end more compromise and less expense and blame is to be expected.

The reason I hinder you as much as possible from further breaches, expenses, disrespect etc., as a special friend can do, is that I am convinced and assured that it will turn out completely contrary to your expec-

tations and I intend to advise you to take the most civil approach before things are set in motion that are imminent.

Concerning the purchase of the piece of land farthest back, I cannot advise you to offer it for less or K. Stevense to give more than you both deem its value to be; however, I trust, if you do compromise that you will come to a mutual agreement about it. Nothing more for the present etc.

In N. York 12 May 1693

Good friend,

The enclosed is a copy of that which I have written to Capt. Berry. I hope that I have not served you badly.

I have examined your bill of sale and find that it is personal bill of sale about which it shall be appropriate to ask Mr. Niccols's advice. However, I sense no difficulty, except it comes to mind that because Capt. Berry is old and infirm, whether it not be good to take possession of the land.

We shall discuss this further when Mr. Niccols comes home, and if Berry refuses to compromise. Nothing more than my greetings, and I remain,

Your honor's friend and servant
B. Bayard

[Addressed:]
To Koert Stevense
In the Bay

[Endorsed:]
B. Bayard
to Capt Berry
May 12, 1693
Copy

[9617-294, Vhsltr-2]

Groningen,
the 15th of May
1729

Honored and Esteemed nephew
Albert Coertens and
Kornelis Coerten van
Voor Heest

I am taking the liberty [to write] by the grace of the Almighty who has granted me life at this time, which is few in years, as my age today is but 30 years, and I am an only son, because my deceased uncle Willim Remmels van Saxsum's sister Annigien Roelef Oosting to whom you, worthy cousin, recently had sent a letter by way of the honorable Pieter Venema, but as my uncle and his son are both deceased, our uncle Willim Remmels died in the month of May in the year 1728 and his son Remmelt Willems died 15 weeks after his father; therefore I find myself duty bound to send this to our relatives, because the letter that you had written to my uncle was placed in my hands and from it I learned that relatives still lived in New York. I also made the letter known to our other relatives who live here in the countryside and also in the province of Groningen as well as in the countryside of Drinthe. We are still a considerable number of sisters and brothers; of children there are fourteen nieces and nephews. There are also still two of our aunts alive. The one lives in the countryside of Drinthe at Ruinen, and the other lives in the region of Groningen on the high sand in the Kalkwijk. And I live in the city of Groningen and am a master shoemaker there by trade, still [ ] a free person. My old boss, where I worked 12 years, whose name is Jan Brinckman, informed me of Pieter Venema, dear relative, and that he had learned from Venema's children that Mister Willem Remmels tot Saaxsum had a letter from New York and advised that I should collect the letter. It was in this way that I learned that the relatives had written and of your well being. I received 12 gl., on behalf of my mother, of the inheritance that the relatives sent from New York; however, whether we were done justice therein I do not know because Willim Oom took it solely upon himself and said that each share could not be any larger. The relatives will be able to figure it out for

themselves, because we divided it into seven parts; with each taking 12 guilders, the total amounted to 84 guilders. Although there were some expenses incurred when Willem Oom went to fetch it from Holland, we gave Willim Oom days before his absence 28 pieces in addition to travel money so that our uncle came into the greatest share. In any case it is past, and I will forget what is behind me, turning myself to that which is before me, wishing the dear relatives God's grace and the attainment of eternal joy and happiness. As we are no longer strangers from one another but are relatives and remain in the blessed eternity of eternities

Herewith closing,
greetings to you dear Nephew
Harmen Jansen Blauw

Greetings to Venema from my boss. If the relatives be pleased, just write to me again which will make me and our relatives here very happy. Greetings to you

[Note:]
This letter was sent from Groningen the 30th of July 1729; because after it was written it was not known when it would be sent.

[9617-295; translation of VHSLTR-3]

Dear Niece and Nephew-Amsterdam, 19 April 1699.

I hope that this finds you and your family in a good disposition; it serves to inform you that we are still healthy here, God be praised. However, it is bad here and an expensive time. We received from Hilbert Coertten f292,– of which I paid to your sister, at your request, the sum of f236–,,– and I am sending now in addition with the bearer of this, Monsr. Pieter Berry, 2 pieces of linen, [ ] one piece white of 52 ells at 13 1/2 stivers the ell; one piece blue, 25 ells long at 12 1/4 stivers the ell, amounting to f50,,8,,4, and gave the balance of the money , being f5,,11,,12 to the same P. Berry to turn over to you, may God grant him a safe voyage, and may he be before you soon in good health. If I can do anything further for you here, I am yours to command. I remain, after cordial greetings, and commending you and all the good relatives to God,

Your dear niece
Yannetye Mooy

Please to do not neglect to write us all as soon as possible.

[Endorsed:]
Jannetye Mooy
to Coert Stevense
April 19, 1699

[Addressed:]
Deliver this letter
to the honorable
Coert Stevenze
van [ ] Hees
on Long Island in the region
of New York

With a friend,
may God protect

[9617-296; Geesjen van Hees to cousins]

Praise God above all, 1 April anno 1688

Most dearest nephews and nieces [cousins?]. I wish to inform you that we are all still healthy and hope to hear the same from you. If it were otherwise, it would be most painful for us to hear. Further, I wish to tell you that we have already received your letter and [ ] your health [ ] and we have already forwarded your letter and we are sending you herewith a letter from Hess. We understand that last year one of your sons was here, which I find surprising because he did not visit us once as he was here in Amsterdam. And I am surprised why you have not written to us once. We have not had a letter from you since my husband died that has now been already eight years since he died. After his death we have had no letters. We have been surprised. We thought that you had died because you did not once write us. My daughter was married last year before winter and she already has a young daughter. We are sending you a letter with our master who is going there to live. Please write us a letter sometime, for a friendship is nothing unless it is maintained. When you write, then write your letters to us. We shall forward them on to Hees. And when you send them, send them to us at Amsterdam at the Haerlemmerdijck across from the Eenhoornsluys [Unicorn

Sluice] past the Orangen Straet opposite Langendijck; to Aunt Egbert. If you want to know our situation just visit our master. He will surely tell you, because as a child he was in our house daily. We are truly saddened that he is leaving. I have no further news to write about. Herewith I commend you to the Lord,

Your dutiful niece,
Geesyen van Hees
[Endorsed:]
Geesyen van Hees
April 1, 1688

[9617-301; Casparus van Zuren to Margarita Polhemus;

February 15, 1687]

Most worthy relatives,

We are thankful for the honor and friendship formerly enjoyed by your honors as well as for the special testimony of your love and affection expressed for us in two particular letters, of which we received both. They were read by us with the same emotion as they were written by you. You thank us for the demonstrated friendship and proposed admonition, supplemented with consolation, by which your hearts supposedly have been greatly strengthened to which I only can say that I have done, or rather have tried to do what was my office and duty, although I have not been able to accomplish and attain my goal in all matters, and that I also have often failed in my duty through some incident. Man, as I know I am also, is subject to human weaknesses and emotions, but nevertheless I rejoice greatly in these your testimonies, It is indeed much in these barren times when, the church has deteriorated so much, that one can convince the minds of the listeners about the truth, that they bear witness to it. But moreso, that one can feel a bit of the power of the truth that they submit to their profession of the savior and, further, the sanctity of the truth of God's image in their behavior. Such are those who are base of heart and poor of spirit, who tremble before the word of God, who yearn for God's salvation, hunger and thirst for Christ the Lord's justice, [ ] for the consolation of the kingdom of the spirit, which also often are accompanied by endeavors of a pilgrimage, but such listeners occur seldom. It has always been true, many are called but few are chosen. All the more in

these [ ] and careless times, that people are usually more infatuated with themselves and the world than with God? Meanwhile, the Lord knows those who are his, for whom the word and the means of grace are always effective for their conversion, consolation and salvation. Thus our calling and service in New Netherland with regard to you has not been in vain. We hope that it is the same with many others and that you shall be further nurtured, edified and consoled by the service of your esteemed teacher D. Varick to blessedness so that the good work that the Lord has begun in you shall also be carried forth until the day of Jesus Christ. I would also sincerely wish that the old Jan Poppe might experience this consolation of God and the joy of his salvation. I know how deep an affliction temptation is; especially when it is so protracted and powerful as you write concerning Jan Poppe. The man should be seeking peace in his advanced years, especially for the soul, so that those at peace are distinct from the sinners, and are preparing themselves for the coming of Jesus in order to accompany him into eternal peace [ ] the brevity of my time and the uncertainty of the ship's departure, did not permit me. I also did not know whether he might be capable of reading and understanding a letter; as [ ] write, he is already far along (almost beyond help). The Lord grant him remission of all his sins, the triumph of Jesus, the admission into his glory. Your letters convey all sorts of thoughts, of contentment, joy, sadness etc. The case of Jan Poppe manifests sadness; however, what concerns yourself, and your daughters Maria and Sara evokes joy. God grant the the child of the first one [ ] may prosper [ ] good health; that it is so disposed that they have peace in country and church. The papists brew us much misfortune. Who knows when or how horrible it shall eventually burst out. May the Lord confirm our hearts in the love of the truth; may he deliver us from all evil deeds and preserve us for his celestial kingdom. Please give our greetings to all the relatives in the steen-raapje, [countryside] in the village, and in the new lands, in the name of your mother, brothers and sisters, all of their children; [ ] greetings from us [ ] with your children, and commend them to the grace of God who will fill you all with his goodness. This is desired by your servant in Christ,

Caspar van Zueren
In Gouderak, 15 Feb. 1687

Please give the letters that you intend to send to us to D. Selyns. He shall take care of them; also try to do the same for the esteemed Catharina Hegemans and Maria Adriaans Smith.

[Addressed:]
To the Honorable and Virtuous

Margarita Polhemius
wife of Willem
Guilliamsz living
in [ ]cover Midwoud

[Endorsed:]
Casparus Van Zueren
to Margaritt Polhemius
Feb. 15, 1687

[9617-302; Hendrick Blombergh to Coert Stevens; March 16, 1714]

Amsterdam, the 16th of March 1714

Most worthy relative Koert Stevens van Voor Heess. I cannot neglect to write at this opportunity because we have written so often and have never received a word, whether news concerning you or concerning the inheritance money of my deceased uncle Jan Kyers van Laer. For we understood from the letter that you wrote to your nephew Wyllem Remmels that our share is sixty punds, currency of the land, and that it was a problem for you because you did not know where we lived in Drente or elsewhere. Last year 1713, the 2nd of June, we wrote—I with your nephew Wyllem Remmels—and we enclosed the letters together, because he is supposed to receive half of our share and we received half the money from their share, namely, of the 434 guilders that you transferred over to Albert Roode in his lifetime, and we proposed to transfer the draft to a certain Bruntynck living in Rokin [Rock kijn] on the corner of the Olyslagerssteege according to our agreement, as you shall have seen in letters from me and from Wyllem Remmel. Now I request that you be so kind to write me about this matter, for which I am sure that you will do me the kindness; and if there is ever anything to be done at Amsterdam, I will gladly be at your service.

I also wrote to Wyllem Remmels that I had written again. Herewith I wish you much prosperity and good health, and remain your affectionate relative and servant,

Hendr. Blombergh

And if you are so kind to write me, you should address the letter to the Syngel near the Korsys bridge, Hendr. Blombergh, master carpenter. And

if it pleases you to transfer the draft, write a letter to me because I have power of attorney from the relative living in Drente.

[Addressed:]
To Mr. Koert
Stevens van Voor Heess
at Amesvoort on
Long Island in
New Netherland

[Endorsed:]
Hendrick Blombergh
to Coert Stevens
March 16, 1714

[9617–297; Letter from Caspar Van Zuren to Coert Stephansz, March 1, 1700]

Most worthy relative Court Stephansz.

It has been four months since your letter of 24 August of last year, old style, came to us. We thank you cordially for the affection that you have once again expressed for us; and consider ourselves indebted to answer the same with equal affection. It is true and very well said what you state in the beginning of your letter, that we must be patient in the oppression, knowing by whom, why and from where it has come to us. But as strong legs can bear luxury, so there is no less courage required to carry the yoke of the Lord, which he has placed upon us on account of our sins. Especially when it afflicts us long and hard, striking us where we are most sensitive, and that the family declines. Such a chastisement is no cause for joy but for sadness. Although it be the will of the Lord, He does what is good in His eyes. He also wants to strengthen us in order to do what is good, and all these adversities of our souls confirm our sanctification. But how lucky you are in your family and with your children! I have no other reason to believe that all your children are healthy, well established, and well married, without exception. We honestly do not know what to do with our children, of whom Johanna, the oldest, is twenty years old. Most of the people here cause much confusion; the one is in the way of the other, even though the one lives from the other. But, God, who offers His Son and His Heaven, should also offer bread; we ask no more, we need no more. With regard to us, my wife is weak and continually sickly. The

years provide no improvement. I have started preaching again, and have been doing it now for about a half year or more. But I am still quite lame; my indisposition and the meager donations leave me no choice. I hope that the Lord increases my strength and that my donations will improve so that I may perform my duties again without effort. We are still enjoying blessed peace. The scarcities of 1698 have already been recompensed by the fruitfulness of 1699. Grain has decreased in price by about one third. We have also received some decrease in taxes. This eases our burden greatly; however, the country still strains under its heavy burdens, and is full of poor people and beggars, and trade remains impaired.

You also reminisce briefly about the swirling discord that so unsettled your region several years ago, setting one friend against the other. It seems that the Lord Count of Bellamount is probably already in attendance at court; however, in the meanwhile this work causes again new disturbance; those who were on bottom come to the top. Perhaps in seven or eight years another governor will come who will again take up the matter, which has given rise to these differences, and then those who are on top will go to the bottom. For the affairs of the world are very changeable, and the senses of men unstable, so that one can make little headway on account of all the vanity. For this reason I think that it is best to remove oneself from all disputes here so that one does not become involved in anything bad at any time, as has already happened. I offer this advice in my letters to all the relatives to you as well as the other people from whom I have also received various letters. I remain neutral in all partisan disputes, and it saddens me that such a blessed land and such flourishing churches have been disturbed and shaken by all these upheavals. I hear that there is serious sickness in New York. I pray that you and all the good inhabitants may be far from all such misfortunes; but if Almighty God should be pleased to send it your way, then I hope that it shall serve to compose the spirits again and to restore the blessed peace. It would still be preferable if it could happen through the Evangelium of Peace and the messengers who will announce this peace. May the God of Peace bless you and the worthy Marritje Kouwenhoven and all the dear children unto eternal peace.

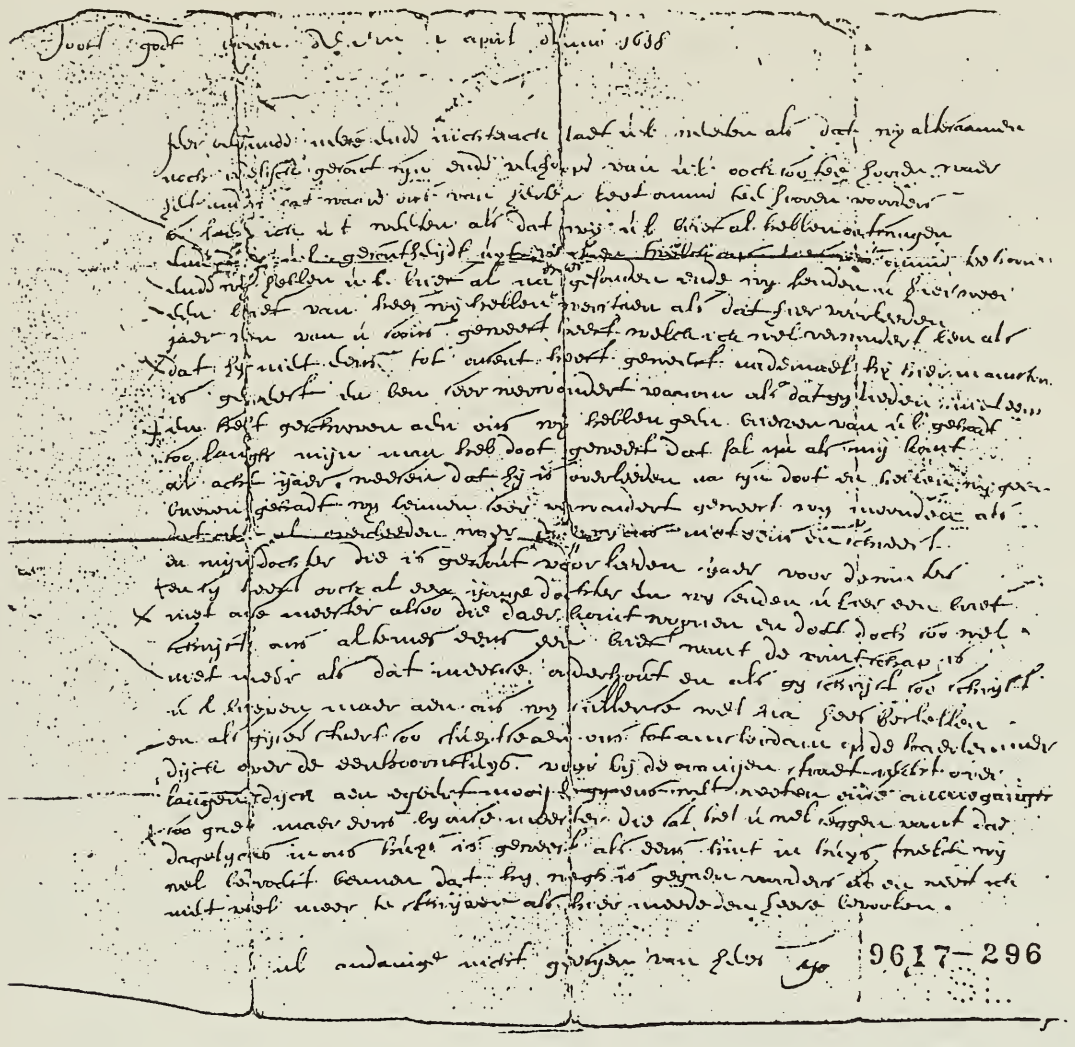
Your most affectionate relatives Caspar and Louise Van Zuren

Greetings to all the relatives
of Amersvoort

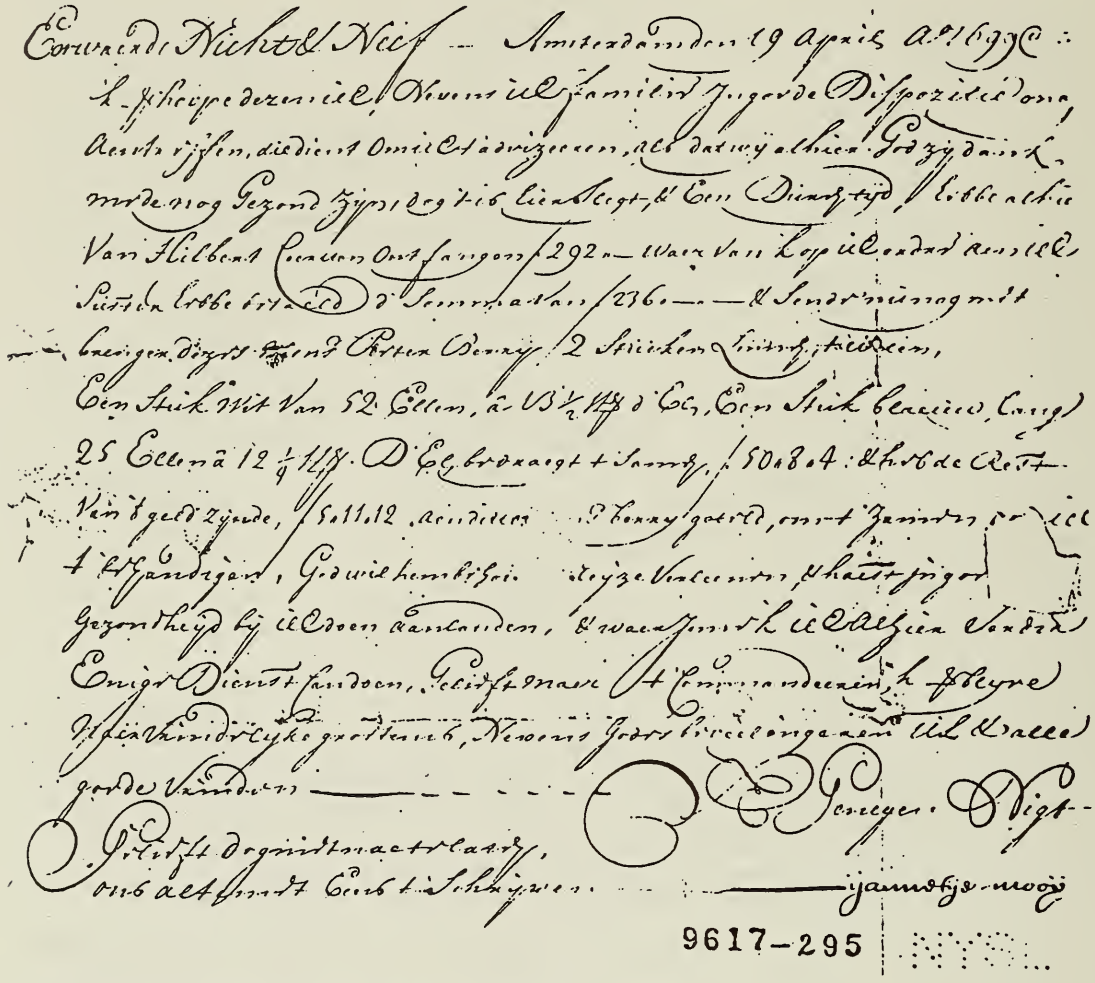
In Gouderak
the 1st of March
1700

[Addressed:]
To the worthy wife and
Coert Stephansz
living in Nieuw Amersfoort
on Nassau Island

Under cover

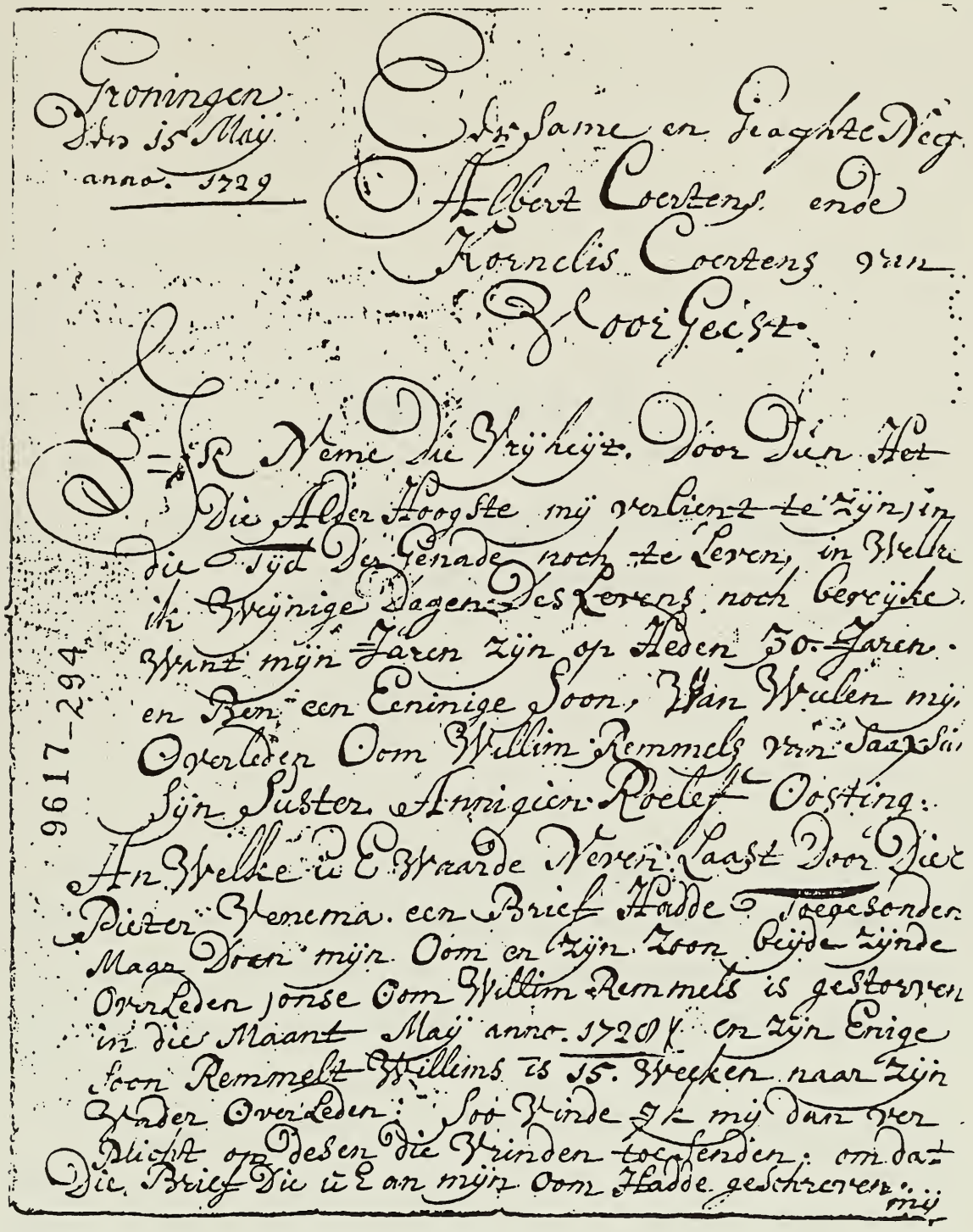


Letter to cousins from Geesyen Van Hees
(April 1, 1688)



9617-295

Letter to Coerte Stevense from Jannetye Mooy
(April 19, 1699)



Groningen
den 15 May
anno. 1729

Edelsame en Geachte Neef
Albert Coertens ende
Kornelis Coertens van
Voor Geest.

Ik Neme die Vrijheyt. Door Dien Het
Die Alder Hoogste mij verlient te zijn, in
die Tijd der Genade noch te Leven, in Welke
ik Weynige Dagen des Levens noch bereyke.
Want mijn Jaren zijn op Heden 30. Jaren.
en Ben een Eeninige Soon, Van Wielen mij
Overleden Oom Willim Remmels van Saaxsum
Sijn Suster Annigien Roelef Oosting.
An Welke u E Waarde Neven Laast Door Die
Pieter Venema. een Brief Hadde toegesonden
Maar Doen mijn Oom en zijn Zoon beijde zijnde
Overleden jonse Oom Willim Remmels is gestorven
in die Maant May anno. 1728 en zijn Enige
Soon Remmelt Willems is 15. Weeken naar zijn
Vader Overleden: Soo Vinde Ik mij dan ver
Plicht op desen die Vrinden toesenden. om dat
Die Brief Die u E an mijn Oom Hadde geschreven.
mij

9617-294

Portion of letter to Albert Coertens and Kornelis Coertens Van Voor Heest from Harman Jansen Blauw (a nephew)
May 15, 1729

Section V

THE NEW NETHERLAND PROJECT

BY PETER R. CHRISTOPH

This paper is the talk given at the 54th Annual Meeting of the Van Voorhees Association on October 11, 1986 at New Brunswick, New Jersey. The New Netherland Project has been a key resource in making available in useful form the records so essential to know and understand our forebears. The very practical problems of reading and translating the early Dutch records are important to recognize.

Peter R. Christoph is a graduate of Hartenick College and holds degrees of Master of Arts and Master of Library Science from the State University of New York at Albany, as well as a certificate from the Institute of Archival Administration at the University of Denver. In 1988, after 18 years as the Administrator of Manuscripts and Special Collections at the New York State Library, he joined the library's New Netherland Project, while continuing as editor of New York Historical Manuscripts, a documentary series now concentrating on 17th century records of the colony of New York.

Peter Christoph has edited many volumes of historical documents, written a colonial biography and written many contributions to colonial history, records, and genealogy.

"The New Netherland Project"

A great many of the early records of our country were kept in Dutch. There were the records of the provincial government of New Netherland, and the records of local governments at Albany, New York and Kingston in New York, as well as in various localities in what are today New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. There were the records of the semi-independent colony of Rensselaerswyck. Beyond the official records we have many records of churches, and a small amount of private business records and personal correspondence has survived. We have to remember that the end of the use of the Dutch language in official records in 1664 did not mean that the language disappeared. For example, records of some churches were kept in Dutch up to 1800, and family usage continues on well beyond that.

In short, there were a great many records in Dutch. Limiting our attention just to the 17th century we still find several tens of thousands of pages. We have enough material to get a very good sense of the history, life, culture, hopes and ambitions of the early settlers.

Sixteen years ago I was placed in charge of the manuscripts collection at the New York State Library, and it was then that I had to face a most frustrating problem. I had in my custody tens of thousands of records that nobody could read. Imagine how annoying that is for a librarian whose purpose in life is to make material available to people.

There were, in fact, many problems. The first is the language. There just are not many people in this country who read Dutch. And those who can read the modern language discover very quickly that the 17th century language is significantly different. To use English as an example, most of us do not read 17th century literature, such as Shakespeare, or the King James Bible, without checking the footnotes and the commentaries regularly. Imagine reading a document from that period with no footnotes, containing words and expression that the experts have never seen before.

A second problem is handwriting. Handwriting styles change greatly over time. I could show you 17th century English documents, written nearly by professional scribes, that most people could not read and that at first glance they might not even recognize as English. The same is true of Dutch documents. Most modern Dutchmen cannot read 17th century documents because they cannot decipher the handwriting.

Now there had been frequent attempts in the past to overcome these difficulties, to find someone who knew Dutch, more or less, and who could translate the records. Several attempts in the 19th century were largely unsuccessful because the translator either did not know Dutch very well, or

did not know English very well. Obviously a translator has to be completely fluent in both. And secondly, they did not have much in the line of dictionaries to help them out. For instance, the unabridged Dutch dictionary was not begun until 1882, and today—a hundred and four years and 23 volumes later—is still not complete. But at least we have most of the dictionary: the 19th century translators had almost none of it. Nor did they have many of the encyclopedias and histories that we have today.

Therefore, we have to face the fact that almost everything in print prior to 1900—that is, prior to the work of A. J. F. van Laer—is really dreadful. The old translators have often totally missed the meaning of a document, so that it may mean exactly the opposite of what the translator indicates. Unfortunately, most of American history relating to the Dutch has been written on the basis of such translations, so that a great deal of the written history of early New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware is pure nonsense. In addition, we must note that many historians consulted neither the Dutch records nor the translations, but rather sought information on New Netherland from New England records. Of course, the New Englanders were no enthusiasts for the Dutch, so that the records used by historians have completely prejudiced the writing of American history against the New Netherland government. For instance, the Peter Stuyvesant we find in the Dutch records is nothing like the ogre of American history; rather, he is young, energetic, a good administrator, and a shrewd negotiator and diplomat who usually got the better of Yankee officials.

One fateful day in 1972 I was visited at the New York State Library by Professor Kenneth Scott, who has edited some 40 volumes of historical records. He was interested in taking on a little publishing project and wondered if I had any suggestions. I did have in my custody some material in translation that had never been published: the first four volumes of the records of New Netherland, translated by the scholarly A. J. F. van Laer. Dr. Scott was excited by the possibilities and went in search of a sponsor to pay the cost of publication. The late Ralph de Groff, trustee of the Holland Society of New York, was so enthusiastic that he became the overseer of a project that began with the Holland Society publishing the first four volumes. After that, Mr. de Groff encouraged us to locate other existing translations, and soon Ken Scott, Kenn Stryker-Rodda and I had edited and published two volumes of early Kingston records. We were encouraged to look for more material, but there were no other decent translations in existence. And then one day at a historical conference, quite by accident I struck up a conversation with Charles T. Gehring, instructor in German at the State University at Albany. He was unhappy where he was, and was looking for

something connected with his specialty: the colonial Dutch language. I thought I might have something. The only problem was that I had no money to hire him, and could not convince anyone in authority in state government that this was an opportunity not to be lost.

So I went back to Ralph de Groff at the Holland Society. He got in touch with another member of the Holland Society, a man with a wonderful name that touches all the Dutch bases—Cortland van Rensselaer Schuyler, who was in charge of building the new government center at Albany for Governor Nelson Rockefeller. Gen. Schuyler brought Mr. de Groff and Mr. Rockefeller together, and although Rockefeller was no longer governor, I suddenly found myself blessed with enough state money to hire myself a translator for a year.

That was twelve years ago, and Dr. Gehring has been with me ever since. I have never been able to get him on the state payroll, having to pay him out of gifts and grants and bake sales. I wangled half a year's salary out of the New York American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, three grants from the Wilson publishing company, I don't know how many gifts from the Holland Society, a year's grant from the National Historical Publications and Research Commission, and nine years of grants from the National Endowment of the Humanities and an awful lot of small donations from private individuals. In between, there have been times when things were pretty grim, especially for Dr. Gehring. Once I was within two hours of having to lay him off when I received word that a gift was coming in that was good for three month's salary.

Things don't get quite that tight, anymore, and we even have the luxury of two part time assistants, although we did have to lay one off for a couple of weeks last year. The one assistant—she's a housewife with a doctorate in German literature—has taken over most of the fundraising, the office work, organizing meetings and conferences, and getting the typescripts in shape for publication. The other assistant is a young Dutch woman who prepares transcriptions of the documents to make translation easier, and she takes on long term research projects such as indexing the Amsterdam notarial records, and preparing a map of the original property owners in Albany.

The English seized control of the colony in 1664, but one does not go to bed a Dutchman on Thursday night, and get up an Englishman Friday morning. The records from the early years of the English government contain a great many documents in Dutch and although the number decreases with time, they remain a significant portion of the records even a quarter century later. The Holland Society early on encouraged us not to limit our

efforts just to the period of Dutch government, but to translate and edit later materials as well. However, we felt that we should agree on some sort of limit as to how far we would go, and finally settled on Leisler's rebellion as a cutoff point, since that was, at least arguably, the final administration of the colony by Dutch nationals.

It has fallen to my wife and me to edit the records of the English government, from the English takeover in 1664 to the fall of Leisler's administration in 1691. This is actually a separate project from the New Netherland Project. The funding for my wife's salary comes from the Holland Society, and nobody pays me to work on the project—I just do it for the fun of it, if that's the word.

There are all sorts of challenges and problems. Some people did not write very well, and some wrote very badly. A petition written by someone who does not have occasion to write anything from one year to the next is usually not a well written document. On the other end of the social scale, but no more readable, was Governor Sir Edmund Andros who had the peculiar habit of writing with a blunt piece of lead, or maybe it was a musket ball, and sometimes he used some sort of red crayon. It can take a couple of hours to figure out one sentence in his handwriting. Paper being scarce and expensive, people tended to crowd their words together, and crowd the lines together, and then write between the lines, which is not helpful. There were no spelling rules back then — the first English dictionary did not come along until a century later, so most people had their own personal spelling rules, and some seemed to use no rules at all. You will often find a word spelled three or four different ways on the same page. You don't always have much to go by when the handwriting is bad and the spelling is inconsistent.

Further compounding the problems are various sorts of damage to the documents. At one time all the documents dealing with Indian land titles on Long Island were bundled together, and some thoughless rodent ate a hole right through the middle of the bundle, so that all those documents are lacking a chunk right out of the center.

A fire at the state capitol in 1911 destroyed many pages of documents, and singed the edges of many others. Often what we have is an oval, a page with the corners and edges burned away. This is a great problem in the Dutch records as well — it is not easy to translate a sentence with the subject missing, or the verb, or both.

Yet somehow we manage to overcome the obstacles and get the books published. So far we have published 16 books in 12 years, which isn't bad. These include two volumes of local New York city records edited by Ken

Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, two volumes that they and I edited of Kingston records, two volumes of provincial records dealing with the Delaware region, translated by Dr. Gehring, and the rest are records of the colonial government, 2 translations by Dr. Gehring, 4 by A. J. F. van Laer, and 4 volumes transcribed and edited by my wife and myself.

In addition to the publishing project, we have several other related activities. Dr. Gehring spent one year compiling records of all documents of the Dutch period located at American institutions, and he has published a guide to these. In the process he visited libraries, historical societies and archives all over the country. Often he found a box or folder with the label 'old Dutch records', but with no information as to what the documents were about, since nobody could read them, and in those cases he organized the papers and provided a brief description of what they were about. In almost every case he was able to get a copy of the documents, either xerox or microfilm, and these are all housed at the New York State Library so that anyone interested in Dutch documents housed any place in this country can find copies of them all in one place.

In addition, we have been trying to acquire copies of relevant documents housed in Europe. We have the surviving records of the West India Co. on 45 reels of microfilm, and abstracts of thousands of notaries' records in Amsterdam relative to America prior to the Revolution.

We also sponsor an annual conference in Albany called the Rensselaerswyck Seminar, a one day affair usually held in September which brings together professional and amateur scholars to present papers on various topics related to some unifying theme. The meetings are open to the public, and for the last few years we have been publishing the papers that were read at the conference. This year the topic was early Albany, last year it was colonial education. Other years it was blacks in the colonial period, crime and punishment, agriculture in Rensselaerswyck, and so on.

Four hundred years ago, Jeremias van Rensselaer published a little gossip sheet called the New Netherland Marcurius for the amusement of his friends. We have revived the Marcurius as an occasional newssheet where readers can find out what conferences and meetings are being held, what books and articles are being published, and it serves as a clearing house where scholars can list their particular interests and current research projects. This has been most useful in letting people know what research is going on, and is particularly valuable in letting people know about relevant work outside their own specialties. It can bring together a genealogist working on the Schuyler family with an archaelogist digging at a Schuyler house site.

That in brief is what the New Netherland Project is about, and the English publishing project as well. Last year a support group was formed, the friends of the New Netherland Project, which helps with various projects including fundraising, organizing the Rensselaerswyck Seminar, and publishing of the Seminar papers. Members receive the Marcurius, and a nice reproduction of a 17th century map suitable for framing, as well as the feeling of satisfaction from having supported a project that produces a tangible and interesting result in return. Realize that this country had no translator of colonial Dutch records for 35 years, from the retirement of A. J. F. van Laer in 1939, until I hired Charley Gehring in 1974. For me, this is a really exciting project—a dream come true, and despite the problems just a whole lot of fun. For those who would like to be a part of it, I have brought along material on how to join the Friends of the New Netherland Project. End of commercial.

While editing the papers of Governor Sir Edmund Andros I came across a curious document in Dutch relating to a chap named Jan Elting. What it was was a notarized certificate signed by several persons testifying that Jan Elting was the son of his parents and that there was no one else around with that name. One does not normally get such a document for no reason, so I became curious to find out what was going on. Elting was from Kingston, so I checked the translation of the Kingston Papers by Dingman Versteeg, which is not always to be trusted, and the Library's microfilm of the original Dutch record. I found that Elting at the same time that he had filed the notarized certificate with the provincial secretary, had also filed his will, his baptismal certificate, and a copy of a court record from the Netherlands in the Kingston city clerk's files. And finally, I checked our abstracts of the Amsterdam notarial records and found a document there relating to Jan Elting. So without stirring out of my office I could check records of colonial New York, the city of Kingston, and the city of Amsterdam, most of them already translated, and find out exactly what was going on with Jan Elting. And that is what the New Netherland Project is all about: making records easily accessible that have never been available before.

I will tell you the story of Jan Elting. He had received word that his father had died in Drenthe, and since Jan Kiersen was going over there on a business trip he gave Jan Kiersen power of attorney to collect whatever inheritance he had coming. Well, when Jan Kiersen got to Drenthe, he was told that the family had not heard from Jan Elting in many years, and had long believed that he was dead, and they certainly had no intention of handing over an inheritance to someone who might well be a fraud. And they produced witnessses in court who swore that Jan Elting was dead.

Jan Kiersen went to Amsterdam where he found some fellow businessmen from American visiting the old country, and they swore in court that Jan Elting was alive and in Kingston. With such conflicting evidence the magistrates didn't know what to do, so they decided Jan Elting would have to show up in court and prove he was who he said he was before he could get his money.

What he did then, was to obtain a sworn statement from several persons originally from Drenthe but living in America as to the fact that he was who he said he was, that they had known him in Drenthe and they had known him in America and he was the same guy and still alive. And since they were from Drenthe the court in Drenthe should know who they were and that they were all telling the truth. Armed with this and other documents, Jan Elting set off for the Netherlands to claim his inheritance. I guess the moral of this is that you should write a letter to your parents once in a while so they know you're still alive.

But anyway, I thought it was an intriguing story, and genealogically interesting because everyone who signed any of these notarized statements gave some personal information, such as his occupation, or his home town, or his age, or something of the sort to identify himself or herself. I ended up writing a little article about the whole affair, which was published three years ago in the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record, and then I sort of forgot about the whole business.

Until I was asked to come down here to speak about the New Netherland Project, and it was suggested that you might like to hear a little about whatever I could find on the early Van Voorheeses. I looked in a genealogy to see what I could find out about the first Voorhees, so I would have some idea of what records he might appear in, and I noticed that Steven Coert was from Drenthe.

Aha, said I, causing strange stares from the people around me, I remember there were a number of people from Drenthe involved in that Jan Elting business. Perhaps there's a Van Voorhees among them.

What I found was that the people swearing that Jan Elting was really Jan Elting were all members of one family: Steven Coert, who gave his age as 79, his wife Willemptje Roellofs, aged 60, his son Coert Stevens, aged 42, his son-in-law Jan Stryker the gunsmith, aged 64, and his wife's brother, Jan Subringh, aged 48. And the fellow that Jan Elting sent to Holland with a power of attorney was also a member of this family, Jan Kiersen, son-in-law of Steven Coert.

Next, I checked the passenger lists in the colonial Dutch records and found that all these people came over on the same boat, along with a con-

siderable number of other persons from Drenthe and Gelderland, which is the next province over.

Now it happened that while I was working on this, just a few days before this year's Rensselaerswyck Seminar, one of the speakers arrived early to do a little research in our library. It was Jan Folkerts from the Netherlands, and as it turned out he would be going to New York after the seminar to meet with members of the Van Voorhees Association to talk about his researching the family in Drenthe.

It happened that Jan Folkerts had read my article on Jan van Elting, and he gave me a copy of one he had written on the mass exodus from Drenthe. From that I learned that there had been a second shipload the same year, so that in all there were nearly 100 people from Drenthe who went to New Netherland. This begins to suggest that there was some sort of mass movement going on, and the most likely reason would seem to be economic. Since Jan Folkerts will be doing some research for your organization in Drenthe, perhaps he can find some evidence in the records to support that supposition.

He had some information for me, about that second boatload, and I had some information for him that I found in records that he did not have access to in Groeningen, so we both benefitted in our research by having met.

I have a working theory as to why that crew of people from Drenthe ended up on Long Island. It centers on four related families.

There was in Drenthe in the 1620's and early 30's a minister named Johannes Theodorus Polhemus. Then he got the missionary bug and in 1636 went to Brazil with his wife and children. We'll leave him there for a while, but don't forget him.

In 1652 another emigrant named Jan Stryker left Drenthe, to settle in a new town on Long Island called Midwout, and later Flatbush. He brought with him his wife, and possibly his wife's brother, who we know was here by the mid 1650's. The wife's name was Lambertje Sebring, her brother was Jan Sebring, and they had a sister named Willemptje Sebring, who was still living back in Drenthe with her husband Steven Coert van Voorhees.

The next event of importance to our story comes two years later in 1654 when the Portuguese drive the Dutch out of Brazil. The Rev. Mr. Polhemus, after 18 years in Brazil catches a ship to New Netherland, while his wife and children take a different ship to return home to the Netherlands.

Mr. Polhemus was invited to settle down on Long Island where several communities were coming into being, and he accepted a call. A church was built, and he was given a nice piece of land at Flatbush. Meanwhile, Mrs.

Polhemus had been trying to get her husband's back wages from the West India Company, without success (the company having lost the colony of Brazil was just about bankrupt), and after two years of failure Mrs. Polhemus gave up and in 1656 came over with her children to rejoin her husband.

One of the children was a grown-up daughter named Adrianna, with whom Jan Sebring was smitten. Soon they were married and settled down next door to her father. Remember that Jan Sebring is the brother-in-law of Steven Coertse van Voorhees, back in Drenthe, also brother-in-law to Jan Stryker on Long Island.

Poor old Domine Polhemus still hadn't been paid. Now it happened that in 1659 Jan Sebring was going back to the old country on business, and so Polhemus gave his son-in-law power of attorney to try and collect the debt. His efforts were successful, the company issuing two bonds to Sebring on Polhemus' account for a combined sum of f3800.

And then in April 1660 Jan Sebring returned to America with a boatload of people from Drenthe including his sister and her husband, Steven Coert van Voorhees and seven little Voorhees. Also on the boat was Jan Kiersen who eventually married one of the van Voorhees girls. Many of these people from Drenthe settled down on Long Island, either in Flatlands where Jan Styker was living, or in Flatbush where Jan Sebring and Domine Polhemus were living.

On the same boat was another party of people from Gelderland, headed for Kingston. With them was Roeloff Swartwout, born in Gelderland, more recently a public official at Kingston.

I suspect something is going on here. It looks to me as at least possible that Swartwout and Sebring went back to the Netherlands as real estate agents for their communities, to encourage folks back home to immigrate to the New World. Swartwout went to his home province of Gelderland for recruits to settle in Kingston, and Jan Sebring went home to Drenthe for recruits to take to Long Island.

There may have been economic pressures at home that encouraged people to get out and start over someplace else. Beyond that, the appeal for Steven Coert's wife was the fact that she already had a brother and sister on Long Island. Steven may not have had strong family ties at home; we note that he had been living some miles away from his more successful brother Albert.

Thirty eight people from Drenthe sailed away on April 16; another fifty sailed shortly thereafter. That sounds very much like a part of people who were recruited, not just a happy coincidence that everybody got the same

idea at the same time. I think they were recruited by a land agent, and I think that land agent was Jan Sebring. That would explain why they all left at the same time, and why many of them ended up in the same place, on western Long Island.

Further work remains to be done in the Netherlands and I look forward to seeing what Jan Folkerts is able to discover for you. Meanwhile in this country, more and more information is being opened up to research, and I think no small part of that is due to the interest in having the Dutch records translated.

Spreading the word about the project is a joyful task. One value of historical and genealogical and family conferences and meetings such as this one today is that they enable people to make contact, to find out who is doing what research and where. The New Netherland Project started at a Holland Seciety historical conference where Kenneth Scott and I first met Ralph de Groff. Several years ago when Dr. Gehring and I were trying to find out what Dutch records still existed in this country we made a tour of New Jersey, and at that time I met your vice-president, Donald Sinclair, who has recently been helpful to my wife in her researching of the Schuyler family in New Jersey. At the Rensselaerswyck Seminar this year I not only met Jan Folkerts, but also your historical committee chairman, Manning Voorhees and his wife. At the Holland Society's 100th anniversary seminar last year I met your genealogical chairman, Fr. William Lydecker, who has been supportive of the New Netherland Project through the Holland Society. One of the real pleasures of being invited to a meeting such as this is that I always meet someone who has access to information that I don't have, and hopefully I have useful information to share in return, and so in time many separate and apparently unconnected projects come in contact and we all learn from each other and the quality of scholarship grows and we learn more and more about such matters as why your ancestors came over here, and what life was like for them after they got here.

Section VI

DOCUMENTS CONCERNING JAN ELTINGE'S DISPUTED PATRIMONY; Sources for Biographical Data on his Family and Friends

BY PETER CHRISTOPH[1]

This interesting episode in the life of Jan Eltinge also casts light on his contemporaries in New Netherland, including our own Steven Coerts. This episode is also discussed in Section II by Jan Folkerts and Section V by Peter Christoph.

As written under Section V, Peter Christoph has been administrator of Manuscripts & Special Collections at the New York State Library and since 1988 has been with the New Netherland Project at the library. He has been a prolific editor of many historical and genealogical works.

There are few seventeenth century records more important for genealogical research than secretarial and notarial papers. Several such documents relating to Jan Eltinge's quest for his patrimony provide the researcher not only with data about the Eltinge family, but also with ages, birthplaces, and other information about his neighbors and friends at Esopus and New Amersfort.

The facts of the case are as follows. Jan Kiersen in 1678 went to the Netherlands with power of attorney to collect an inheritance for Jan Eltinge from the estate of Eltinge's late father Roelof. Upon finding that the estate curator, another Jan Eltinge, was uncooperative, Kiersen sued. In court his lawyer presented testimony that the Jan Eltinge in America was a legal heir of Roelof Eltinge, while the defendant produced testimony that the same person had been dead for several years. The magistrates were understandably perplexed and suggested that the claimant come to the Netherlands and present himself to the court.

Therefore in the fall of 1679 Jan Eltinge collected depositions from several persons who knew him and who themselves were known in his home province of Drenthe, wrote a will, filed copies of all the relevant papers with the Kingston Secretary and the New York Provincial Secretary, and sailed to the Netherlands. There he acquired a record of his baptism and presumably went to court. We have no information on the resolution of the suit. He was back in Kingston as early as 5 May 1681, on which date he was in court on another matter.

THE DOCUMENTS

Abstract by the late Dr. Simon Hart (1) of a deposition by Paulus Cornelisz and Jan Theunisz, notarized by Adriaan van Santen, on file at the Gemeente-Archief of Amsterdam (File No. N.A. 3787, Fol. 145, 146). My translation:

1678. Sept. 5. Paulus Corneliss, of Baambrugge aged 52 years, Jan Theuniss of Dyckhuysen, born at Amsterdam, aged 28 years, declared at the request of Jan Kiersen from Drente, that they have lived with him many years in Nieuw Nederland, namely Paulus Corneliss in the village of Esopus, van Dyckhuysen and Kiersen in the village of Amersfoort. They have known for many years Jan Roeloffs Helten also living in the village of Esopus, being a son of Roelof Eltingh born in Swichteloo in Drente. When they departed on 13 May of this year from Santpunt (2) at the bay of Nieuw Jorck on the ship the Providens, the said Jan Roeloffss, his wife and 2 children were in good health.

The attorneys of Jan Elting of Esopus vs. Jan Elting of Swichteler; Minute of a court at Rolde in Overijssel. Translated by Dingman Versteeg from a copy in the Kingston Secretary's records, Volume B, page 350. (3)

Minutes of the Session held at Rolde, November 12, 1678.

In the case of the advocate Bernhardt Sassenraet, nicknamed "Luymmiel" who had been empowered by Jan Kiersen from New Netherland to act for him the attorney for Jan Eltinge also from New Netherland, plaintiff, of the first part, and Jan Eltinge at Swichteler having married the widow of the deceased Bartelt Eltinge at Swichteler, as possessor of the plaintiff's [principal's] parental estates, defendant, of the second part. Plaintiff demands that defendant shall be condemned to render him an accounting and furnish him with an inventory of party's parental estate, and thereupon to enter upon a partition and division of the same, cum expensis. Against which the defendant maintains that he is not obliged to supply the demanded inventory, as long as no sufficient proof is shown that Jan Eltinge is living, maintaining that the produced letters and the power of attorney are in every way suspicious, because they contain several contradictions. They also contradict the declarations under oath, made by three witnesses before the court at Meppeldt (4) in which they declared that this Jan Eltinge had died already some years ago. The plaintiff after producing his proofs in writing, and besides offering to furnish sufficient security demands the restitution of the property. In case it should be afterward found out that this Jan Eltinge had died, we the Heeren Drosts (5) and 24 assessors decide and decree that the plaintiff's principal himself shall come over to this country, or that the plaintiff shall adduce better and more perfect proof of Jan Eltinge being alive, before a decision can be handed down in this case, reserving the expenses ad finem Lites. Given on the date, as above.

In the presence of me,
(was signed) L. Nysingh.

An exact copy of the original,
Known to me,
(signed) W. dLaMontagne, Secretary,

Testamentary disposition by Jan Eltinge.

Translated by Versteeg from Kingston Secretary's records E:177.

In the name of the Lord, Amen.

Whereas Jan Roelofsen Elting being now ready to depart for Holland is considering the perils of the seas, the injuries from heaven, the certainty of death, therefore desiring to dispose of his estate during his lifetime wishing that this instrument shall be in force as a testament or codicil and last

will in proper form that, after death, his wife Jacomyntie Sleght shall remain in the full possession of either lands or other effects whatever they may be or however named, only that she shall pay, after her death, to the children by her marriage with Gerrit Foocken, deceased, the amount of two hundred schepels of wheat for their father's patrimony, Jan Elton, too, is bound to do the same in case he should be the survivor, he will remain in possession under the above condition, and also pay out to the above children the quantity of two hundred schepels of wheat at the time of his remarrying or if the children desire the same after their mother's death. For the purpose of securing the said two hundred schepels of wheat the land at Horly remains mortgaged till the full and effective payment, and is not permitted to be alienated until the said amount shall have been paid. Promising on both sides, to comply with the above. In testimony of the truth have subscribed to the same in the presence of two magistrates this September 30, 1679, at Kingston.

Joost Adryaans Jan Eltynge
Benjamin Provoost Jacomyntie Slecht
Cornelis Barents Slecht as
Roelof Swartwout guardians

Deposition of several persons concerning Jan Eltinge. Original at the New York State Library: New York Colonial Manuscripts 28: 136. English portions are shown here in italics; the rest is my translation from the Dutch.

Certificate for Jan Elten

On this day the 10th of October Anno 1679 appeared before us [we being] Captain James Hubbard, Elbert Elbertsz Stoothoof, and Jaques Corteljau at the request of Jan Elten, inhabitant of Kingston, [he] departing soon from here to the Fatherland, the honorable Steven Coerten aged 79 years, Willemtje Roeloffs aged 60, Jan Strycker gunsmith aged 64 years, Jan Subringh aged 48 years, Coert Stevensz aged 42 years, all of them natives of the land of Drenten, who declare to be true and truthful that the aforesaid petitioner was legitimately born to Roeloff Elten by his wife Aeltjen Elten in the village of Swigtel, lying in the aforesaid land of Drenten.

We further declare as far as we know there is nothing more about him but what is in honor and virtue, and further, in all the time of our remembrance we have known no one else to have carried this name. Herewith they end their deposition ready to confirm it with a solemn oath. In witness whereof signed with our own hands at N. Amesvoort on Langh Eylant in America. on the above date

(was signed)
Steven Coerten
the mark of Willemtje Roeloffs
Jan Strycker Roeremaecker
Jan Sueberingh
Coert Stevensen

(written below) Testifide in the presence of us Underwritten under Oath,

(was signed)
J:Hubbard Justice
Elbert Elbertsen Justice
Ja: Corteljou Justice

Attestation of Matthias Nicholls to Jan Eltinge's oath. New York Colonial Manuscripts 28: 135.

New York on Manhatans Island
in America, October 13th 1679.

This day appeared before mee Jan Elten alias Eltynge, and tooke his Oath upon the holy Evangelist of Almighty God, that hee is and hath allwayes beene taken and reputed to bee the person, whom those within specifyde, have certifyed their knowledge of (6) before the three Justices of the Peace, and that hee never knew or heard of any other of his name to bee the son of Roeloffe Elten his father, and Aeltien his mother.

Matthias Nicolls.
Secretary of the Province
of New Yorke.

A Certificate concerning Jan Elten alias Elting, and his Oath thereupon, sent by him into Holland attested Oct. 13, 1679. He went for Engld. in [blank].

Abstract of Eltinge Baptismal certificate. (7) Present location of the actual certificate is unknown.

Jan Eltinge, son of Roeloff Eltinge and Aaltjen Eltinge, was born at Swichtalaer, a dependency of Beyla, situate in the Province of Drenthe in the year 1632, on the 29th of July, old style, and hath received and was named Jan Eltinge, born of honest and virtuous parents, who have always sustained a good reputation among us and whose kindred is still numerous. Dated at Bayle, Jan. 20, 1680, and signed by Guiljemus Hofstede, Cecle Beylensis et Classis Meppelanae, pt. Deputatus. Maria Eltine, his sister, was born Febr. 28, 1630, Barent Eltinge, his brother, was born Dec. 18,

1631, as all appears from a certificate, which Jan Eltinge brought with him from Beyle.

1. From Dr. Hart's unpublished "Noord Amerika Chronologie," abstracts (in Dutch) of some 5,000 Amsterdam notarial records relating to America, 1598-1750; microfilmed for the New York State Library by the Gemeente-Archief (State Library microfilm A-FM 200-I).

2. Sandy Hook in New York harbor.

3. This entry appears among documents of October 1679, and was undoubtedly entered at the behest of Jan Eltinge. The Kingston Records were microfilmed by the Paul Klapper Library, Queens College; the New York State Library has a copy (film A-FM 200-G). Versteeg's translation was photocopied for the State Library by the Ulster County Clerk's Office (State Library mss. SC16584).

4. Probably Meppel in Overijsel.

5. Magistrates.

6. See the previous document.

7. Based upon the abstracts in Gustave Anjou's Ulster County, N.Y., Probate Records, 1:39, and Clarence J. Elting's "Lineage of the Elting Family"; Olde Ulster 3:150 (May 1907).

Footnotes

1. *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*, Vol. 113 New York, October 1982 Number 4; Pages 193-197. (Reprinted with permission of the author and the publisher.)

Index

THROUGH A DUTCH DOOR

Indexed by Hazel Dulin Voris

We are indebted to Hazel Dulin Voris of Springfield, Missouri for the preparation of this index. She has been active in genealogy since 1976, is past president and currently publication chairperson of the Ozarks Genealogical Society. Hazel has written several articles on the computer and indexing for the Genealogical Helper, and crusades for book indexing.

Hazel and husband Larry operate Voris Hydraulics and enjoy their three children and three grandchildren.

Hazel has also prepared an index for this association's book, The Van Voorhees Family — Vol. 1, The First Four Generations.

Note: The Family Tree Charts on pages 84-92 are not indexed

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